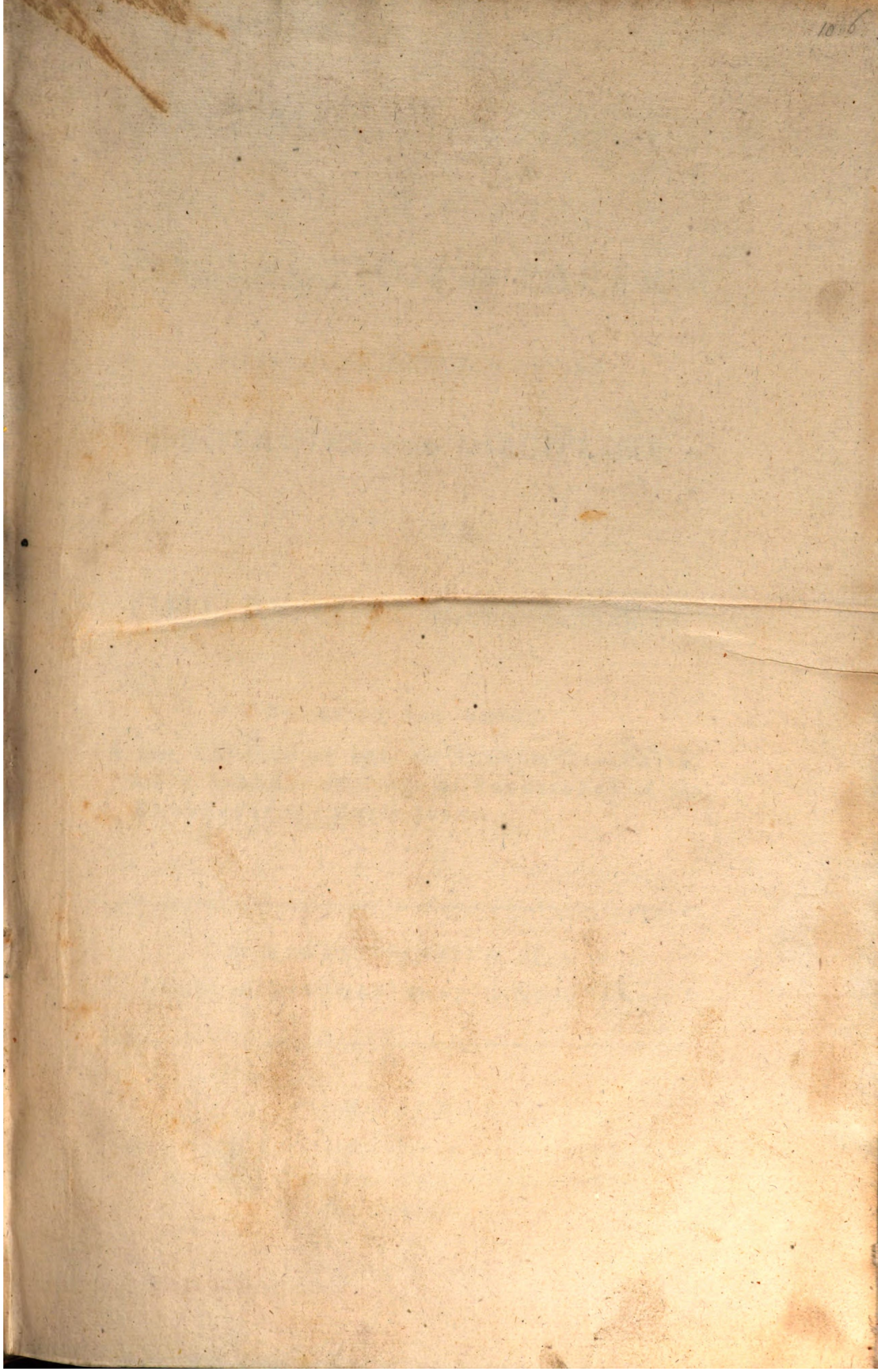




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POLEMICAL TRACTS:

OR A

COLLECTION OF PAPERS

WRITTEN IN DEFENCE OF THE

DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE

OF THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

A Short Exposition upon the Church-Catechism;
and a Sermon concerning the Excellency of the
Knowledge of Christ Jesus.

By HENRY STURGEON, M. A.

Rector of CAROLDENHAM in NORFOLK.

CAMBRIDGE.

Printed by J. STANLEY, at the Press of J. STANLEY.

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MDCCLXXII.



T O

Sir EDMUND BACON

OF GARBOLDISHAM, BARONET.

SIR,

IT is with some confidence of a favourable acceptance, that I do my self the honour of prefixing your name to this Work. If I am not unfortunate in the Execution, the Design of it cannot displease you; which is to vindicate the Doctrines and Discipline of the Church of *England*, in the Reformation and Establishment whereof the great Founder of your Family had so eminent a Share. This consideration alone, Sir, gives you more than a common right to my Addresſes on this occasion: which yet was (as indeed it ought to be) of far less

DEDICATION.

weight with me than the Knowledge I have of your own personal Worth, and the obligations you have so lately laid me under. As the Kindness I received from You came to me exceedingly increased in value by the generous manner in which you gave it; so I find the remembrance of it to be a perpetual call upon Me to labour that you may never think your Bounty ill bestowed. And thus much, Sir, I will venture to assure you that a Will shall never be wanting to shew you how much I value your good Opinion; and I hope you will be pleased to accept of this just, though slender, Tribute as an earnest of that readiness with which I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient and

most devoted humble Servant

HENRY STEBBING.



P R E F A C E.

I HAVE so little to say for my troubling the World with the following Collection, that I chuse rather to commit my Self to the Clemency of the Publick, than to offer at any Reasons to justify me in what I have done. Some Account perhaps may be expected of what has been performed in this New Edition; and for this a few Words will suffice.

IN disposing the several Tracts contained in this Volume, I have not so much consider'd the Order of Time in which they were first published, as the Matters about which they are conversant. For this Reason the Discourses concerning the Operations of the Holy Spirit, and some Points relative to that Dispute, stand first, as containing a proper Foundation for many Things which occur in the following Parts of the Work. These Papers had received all the Perfection I could give them upon the first Impression, and therefore I have reprinted them without any material Alteration.

THE Dispute with the Quakers has suffer'd some Change; not in the Relation of any Matter of Fact (which had not been just) nor yet by any Addition of New Arguments (which seem'd needless) but by retrenching several Things which upon more mature and deliberate Judgment, I thought might very well be spared. I have however ventured to add one very short Piece to the rest, which I thought might be useful to some who may not perhaps be entirely satisfy'd with the Foot upon which the general Controversy proceeds.

BUT the greatest Alterations have happened in that Part of the Work, which concerns the late Disputes about the Rights of a Christian Church. It was once my Design to have reprinted all my Treatises upon this Subject in the Form in which they stood at first, with the Addition of some other small Tracts which seem'd necessary to make the Defence compleat. But upon farther Consideration I thought the true Way would be to digest the whole into one intire Piece, which once resolv'd upon necessarily made Way for a great Variety of Additions and Defalcations.

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The chief of what is added, the Reader will find in the three first Chapters of Part 2. Sect. 1. which in truth are little more than Sketches of what (would my Health have permitted it) was intended to have been drawn out into a greater Length. But such as it is, it will, I hope, be found in a tolerable Degree sufficient for the End I chiefly aim'd at, which was (so far as I was able) to satisfy the Reasons of those who love to fetch their Principles merely from the Scriptures, which though they were never intended to shut out all other Helps to Knowledge, are certainly the best Foundation whereupon to build a true Judgment in all Questions, which concern the Religion of Christians. As to what is omitted, I need only say in general, that it is every Thing which seem'd more to affect Persons than Things; Every Thing of which upon more cool Reflexion I could not thoroughly approve; of which Kind that something here and there occurred I am very free to acknowledge. But in the main the Arguments stand just as they did. Some, 'tis possible, may be forward enough to blame me for making so little reckoning of my Time, as to spend it in raking together the Ashes of a Controversy now dead and forgotten; and were the Effects of it dead too, I should have been well enough contented to have suffer'd it to rest in Silence. But as the Points then debated touch Christianity in a very tender Part, and will always minister Occasion for Dispute and Contention to those who are Enemies to good Order and Discipline, I presume I shall not want an Apology sufficient to justify this Part of my Design in endeavouring to clear up those Difficulties with which Questions of this Sort are commonly entangled.

I SAW no Cause to alter any Thing in the Essay concerning Civil Government which follows; and as to the Exposition upon the Church-Catechism, and Sermon, since they were the only Pieces remaining, and may on some Accounts have their Use, I shall be excused I hope in taking the Liberty of giving them a Place in this Volume.

T H E

*A TABLE of the TREATISES contained in
this Volume.*

- I. A Treatise concerning the Operations of the Holy Spirit.
- II. Discourses upon several Subjects relative to the foregoing Question, *viz.* REGENERATION, SAVING FAITH, &c.
- III. An Account of a Conference held with JOSEPH MIDDLETON a Quaker, upon the Subject of WATER-BAPTISM.
- IV. A Defence of the foregoing Account against the Quakers Objections.
- V. A farther Defence of the foregoing Account against the Objections of JOSEPH MIDDLETON.
- VI. A short Proof of the Necessity of WATER-BAPTISM.
- VII. A Defence of the Report of the COMMITTEE of the Lower House of CONVOCATION: In two Parts.
- VIII. An Essay concerning Civil Government consider'd as it stands related to Religion.
- IX. The Young Christian instructed, or a Short Exposition upon the Church-Catechism: In two Parts.
- X. A Sermon concerning the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus.



ERRATA.

In the Operations of the Spirit.

PAG. 96. lin. 37. dele *that*. P. 107. in the bottom Margin lin. 3. r. *desires*.

In the Discourses upon several Subjects.

PAG. 15. in the bottom Margin l. 1. for *qua* r. *qua*.

In the Quaker-Controversy.

PAG. 7. lin. 17. for *Arguments* r. *Argument*. P. 21. l. 11. for *IN OUR* r. *IS OUR*.
PAG. 47. lin. 1. after *Replies* add *to my Arguments*.

In the Defence of the Report.

PAG. 5. lin. 8. instead of *to Separate and he is condemned*, read thus, *to Separate and he is justified in so doing, or not to Separate and he is condemned*. P. 106. lin. 46. for *willing* r. *willingly*. P. 148. l. 48. for *deferred* r. *decreed*. P. 151. lin. 27. for *with them* r. *with you*. P. 154. lin. 44. for *Judgments* r. *Judgment*.
P. 162. lin. 23. for *where* r. *while*.

In the Essay upon Civil Government.

PAG. 28. lin. 26. for *But* r. *For*, P. 34. lin. 35. for *Netions* r. *Nations*. P. 40. lin. 13. for *shows* r. *it shews*.



A TREA-

A
T R E A T I S E
C O N C E R N I N G T H E
O P E R A T I O N S
O F T H E
H O L Y S P I R I T :

B E I N G T H E
S U B S T A N C E

Of the late Reverend and Learned

Dr. WILLIAM CLAGETT'S
D I S C O U R S E

U P O N T H A T
S U B J E C T.

With large ADDITIONS.

By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.

Written in the Year, 1719.

A
TREATISE
CONCERNING THE
OPERATIONS
OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT:

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE

Of the late Reverend and Learned

Dr. William Claggett's

DISCOURSE

UPON THAT

SUBJECT.

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—A—

T H E
P R E F A C E.

THE Discourse of the late Reverend and Learned Dr. WILLIAM CLAGETT against Dr. OWEN upon the Subject of the *Holy Spirit's Operations*, having obtained so general an Esteem among the Judicious, I presume I may be excused from making any Apology for publishing this Treatise, which is intended to render the Labours of that Great and Excellent Man of more general Use and Benefit.

I HAVE always been of the Opinion, that an Abstract of this Work carefully drawn up, would be more serviceable to the Publick than reprinting the Book it self, which is filled with a Variety of Personal Disputes, of no use to us at this Distance of Time. These Things therefore, how proper and necessary soever they might have been when our Author wrote, are now become so many Redundancies; which being cut off, and supplied by an Addition of other Matters in their stead, of a more general relation to the main Subject, I conceived not only that the whole might be reduced to a much narrower Compass, but that a Treatise might be furnished out more compleat and perfect in its Kind, than it was consistent with our Author's Design to make his, who having had no Body to deal with but Dr. OWEN, has therefore omitted many Things, which otherwise might have been added, and often left the general Argument, to pursue his Adversary through those particular Tracts, which he had been pleased to chalk out to his Readers.

WHETHER a Work managed after this sort will be allowed to be properly an Abstract, I am not at all solicitous. 'Tis the Method which, in this Case, I always judged would be most useful, and which accordingly I have pursued. The general Division of the whole Subject is very near the same with the Author's, and under these Heads is reduced whatever I could find pertinent to each of them in both Parts of his Book. Wherever he has been defective, I have supplied what is wanting; wherever he abounds, I have retrenched him, yet so as (if I judge rightly) to have left the Strength and Beauty of the Argument entire. But that he might not suffer in the Opinion of any through my Fault, I have always distinguished my own Insertions by an Asterisk and a Dagger, the former of which I have placed at the beginning, and the latter at the End of every Insertion. To these

The P R E F A C E.

Marks I have affixed others corresponding in the Margin, directly opposite to those Lines in which they are placed; so that by casting his Eye upward or downward, the Reader may presently discover whether any Passage which he doubts of belongs to the Author or to me. In the other Parts of this Work I have followed the Author either in Sense and Substance, or else Word for Word, in which latter Case I have always prefixed inverted Comma's to every Line. I am not sensible that in abridging any Part of our Author's Discourse I have varied any thing from his true Sense and Meaning; but that the Reader may, if he pleases, the more easily make himself a Judge of this Matter, I have at the beginning of every Paragraph (and sometimes oftener) referred to the Part and Pages from whence I drew it.

As this Book was intended not only to establish the Truth, but also to refute Error, it was necessary that the Opinions of others, as well as my own, should be taken notice of. In stating these Opinions I thought it would be most proper to refer to those Authors who are most in Vogue amongst those of the same Side. Upon this Account it was that, setting aside Dr. OWEN, I have had recourse to Mr. TURRETIN, whose System, I think, is allowed to be a Standard of the Doctrines of that Party of Men for whom he has engaged. That the learned Reader may be satisfied that I have represented his Meaning fairly, I have set down his own Words in the Margin, wheresoever I have had occasion to cite him; which Method I have also observed in quoting any other *Latin* Author.

THUS much I thought it necessary to advertize my Reader of, in relation to the general Design and Method of this Treatise. How well I have answered this Design, I must be contented to leave to the Judgment of others. If the Doctrine of the Operations of the Spirit be hereby set in a clear Light; if it appears in every Part of it to be agreeable to God's Word, to natural Reason, and to the great Ends of Religion, I promise my self that I shall not be thought by any to have undertaken an unprofitable Employment.

It was once my Design to have added to this Work some Discourses concerning Regeneration and saving Faith, Terms which in these latter Days have been very much abused, to the great Prejudice of Christianity, and concerning the former of which our Author himself has very largely and very excellently treated. But finding that these Papers are already swelled up into a reasonable Bulk, and considering that these Matters do not properly belong to the Subject in hand, I have resolved to reserve them to be discussed (together with some other Points) in a Volume by themselves, which, if it pleases God to spare me, shall be published at a convenient Season.

THE
C O N T E N T S.

The INTRODUCTION, wherein the State and
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CHAP. XIV.

Some other evil Consequences examined.

§. I. A second Consequence, viz. That according to our Principles the Difference between the Converted and Unconverted is of Adam's Making. This Consequence owned to be good. But not to contradict St. Paul, 1 Cor. 4. 7. §. II. The true Sense of that Place laid down. §. III. An Objection answered. And the Point fully settled by three Operations. §. IV. A third Consequence, viz. That upon our Principles it was possible, in the nature of the thing, that some should have been converted, owned also to be good. No arguing from hence against the Divine Providence. Nor yet against the Possibility of Man's being certain whether any will be converted. §. V. The fourth Consequence, viz. That our Principles tend to make Men careless in the Duty of Prayer and Thanksgiving, denied to follow. And the Objection returned upon our Answerers. §. VI. The fifth Consequence, viz. That our Doctrine commands the Grace of Adam with the Grace of Christ, denied and answered. §. VII. The sixth and last Consequence, viz. That according to our Principles the Conversion of Men, then the Conversion of the World, is not only possible, but necessary. But rightly against the



Of the Possibility of the Conversion.

§. I. This Question already answered by plain Texts of Scripture. §. II. The Question brought in by the General Sort of Arguments on the Negative side proposed. The full Answer. §. III. The second from the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, considered. §. IV. Nor yet the third from the Effect of his Intercession. §. V. Answer to the Argument from Rom. 11. 29. §. VI. A Reply to the Argument from John 10. 28, 29. §. VII. And to that from John 6. 37, 39. §. VIII. And to that from John 17. 12. §. IX. And to that from 1 Joh. 3. 9. §. X. And to that from Rom. 8. 35. & 36. §. XI. The Answer to certain Objections which are supposed to follow from our Doctrine. §. XII. The whole concluded by a general Inference.

CHAP. XVI.

Some Practical Inferences drawn from the whole.

§. I. All which Men are capable of by the Doctrine of the Spirit's Operations.



A
DISCOURSE
CONCERNING THE
OPERATIONS
OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT.

The INTRODUCTION.

Wherein the State and Method of this Controversy is laid down.

“ **T**HROUGH the Assistance of that Holy Spirit, whose Operations Part I.
 “ I intend to treat of, I shall lay down, as clearly and methodi- P. 55.
 “ cally as I can, what I find the Holy Scriptures have taught us
 “ concerning his Operations, and endeavour, as I go along, to
 “ remove some erroneous, and, as I am persuaded, dangerous Opinions,”
 which have been, and are still maintained by many, in relation to that Subject.
 * I do not think it at all material to take notice, in this place, of the various *
 Significations of the Word *Spirit*, that are to be met with in the Bible, since
 every Reader will easily apprehend that, † by the *Spirit* (when we speak of his †
 Operations) must be meant the *Holy Ghost*, or the Third Person in the blessed
 Trinity. Wherefore in order to a clear and full stating the present Contro-
 versy, it needs only to be observed, that by the Operations of the Spirit
 I mean,

1. “ SUCH Operations as the Mind of Man is the Subject of; and there- P. 61.
 “ fore I do not intend to say any thing of the Work of the Spirit in the
 “ Creation of Man, in enduing him with intellectual and moral Abilities,
 “ much less in the Creation of the World, the Heavens and the Earth, &c.
 “ for they are hereby supposed to have been created, and to be what they
 “ are.

P. 62.

2. " I INTEND all such Acts of the Holy Ghost upon our Minds, as are proper to cause certain Qualities in them, as Faith, Charity, Meekness, &c. but I do not mean, nor is it requisite for me, to say any thing of the Operations of the Spirit, whereby our Souls are sustained in their Natures.

3. " I MEAN likewise those Operations of the Spirit, the Promise whereof is contained in the Gospel of Jesus Christ: by which Limitation of the Subject you see I am not like to trouble you with an Enquiry concerning the Operation of the Spirit upon the Mind of Man before the Fall; nor shall I discourse of the Nature and Degrees of the Spirit of Prophecy, as it was communicated before the coming of Christ, for these are not the Operations of the Spirit which Christ has promised in his Gospel.

P. 63.

4. " I ALSO mean those Operations of the Spirit, the Continuance whereof is promised to the Church in all Ages, removing those from the Matter of our Enquiry which were peculiar to the first, *i. e.* such as shewed themselves in the extraordinary and miraculous Gifts of the Apostles and Believers in that Time, who were to establish the Christian Religion by *the Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power.*" These ordinary and common Operations of the Spirit, I say, are those to which I shall confine my Thoughts in the following Discourse, and the Method which I propose to my self is to shew,

P. 70, 71.

" FIRST, What those Effects are, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give the Holy Spirit in all Ages of the Church.

* * SECONDLY, What the Holy Spirit does in order to the producing of these Effects. †

" THIRDLY, To whom the Promise of the Spirit belongs.

" FOURTHLY, What is the Manner and Measure of his Operations.

" BY shewing what we are taught in the Scriptures concerning these Things, I hope the Reader, who hath not so well considered them, may gain a profitable Knowledge of this Part of Christian Doctrine; and that is a profitable Knowledge, which will incite him to the Study of true Godliness. For the Promise of the Spirit is made to encourage Men to be good, and the principal End which I aim at in this Undertaking, is to make it appear what great reason they have to endeavour earnestly to be so, since God has promised to assist them with his holy Spirit.



CHAP. I.

A general Account of those Effects, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give the Holy Spirit in all Ages.

§. I. **F**IRST I am to shew what those Effects are, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give the Holy Spirit in all Ages. Now these in general I affirm to be such, and such only, as it is needful for the Spirit to work or produce in us. * The Truth of this Assertion appears from the Goodness and Wisdom of Almighty God, the former of which Perfections as it will not suffer him to deny us the needful Gifts of his Spirit, so the latter will as effectually restrain him from bestowing upon us any but such. And because this Argument is so well illustrated by our Saviour in his Discourse to his Disciples, *Luke 11.* I shall here give you the Substance of it. †

§. II. “ WE find (*ver. 1.*) that one of his Disciples said unto him, Lord, teach P. 73 to
 “ us how to pray. Whereupon he taught them that Form, *Our Father which art*
 “ *in Heaven, &c.* Having thus answered their Desire, he takes this Occasion
 “ to require them to pray fervently and importunately, urging his Command
 “ with this Argument, that if they did so, they should certainly be heard
 “ (*ver. 9.*) This Argument is enforced by two Similitudes, the first whereof is
 “ that of a Man who goes to his Friend at Midnight to beg three Loaves for
 “ the Entertainment of another Friend of his. Now it is here observed that
 “ the Request was very troublesome and unseasonable (*ver. 7.*) yea, the Trou-
 “ ble was so great, that the bare Friendship that was between them would not
 “ have prevailed. Yet on the other hand 'tis observed that two Considerations
 “ prevailed with him, *viz.* that of the Necessity and that of the Importunity
 “ of his Friend; *tho' he will not rise and give him because he is his Friend, yet be-*
 “ *cause of his Importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth* (*ver. 8.*)
 “ Now from hence our Saviour concludes (*ver. 9.*) that if we ask, it shall be
 “ given us, *i. e.* that God will give us whatsoever Things we ask of him im-
 “ portunately, if those Things are needful for us; and this with great reason;
 “ for if a Man will grant to his Friend what he is importunate with him for,
 “ if it be needful for him, tho' he cannot do it without Trouble and Uneasi-
 “ ness to himself, how much more will God, who loveth us more than a Man
 “ can love his Friend, bestow such Things upon us as are needful, if we
 “ earnestly desire him, especially since he can without any Trouble to himself
 “ grant our Requests? In the next Similitude the Argument is improved. *If a*
 “ *Son shall ask Bread of any of you that is a Father, will he give a Stone? Or if he*
 “ *ask a Fish, will he give him a Serpent? Or if he ask an Egg, will he offer him a*
 “ *Scorpion?* Now here. 1. The Son asks of the Father, where there is greater
 “ Affection on the one hand, and greater Dependance on the other, than be-
 “ tween Friend and Friend. 2. The Son requests Food necessary to sustain
 “ himself, not for the Entertainment of another, as in the former Similitude.
 “ Wherefore seeing here is greater Love on his Part that is asked, greater De-
 “ pendance and Necessity on his Part that asks, our Saviour concludes that he
 “ will prevail. Hence therefore he argues, *If ye then, being evil, know how to*
 “ *give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give*
 “ *the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* The Argument proceeds *a minori*, and
 “ the Force of it lies in this, that if Earthly Parents, who may be tenacious
 “ towards others, and (a) *envy* what they enjoy, will not yet be so towards

(a) Thus the Word *πονηρός* is sometimes taken, as *Matth. 20. 15.* *Is thine Eye evil (πονηρός) art thou envious, because I am good?*

“ their Children, when they ask such Things as they need, much less will
 “ God, our heavenly Father, and our best of Friends, deny us his holy Spirit
 “ (i. e. (b) *the Gifts* of his holy Spirit) if we ask him for it.

P. 76. §. III. THIS is the Substance of our Saviour's Argument, which I think does abundantly confirm the Assertion above laid down, *viz.* That the Effects, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give the Holy Spirit in all Ages, are such, and such only, as it is needful for the Spirit to work or produce in us. “ For it is plain that in both Similitudes the Things that were
 “ asked, either by the Friend or the Child, were really such as they stood in
 “ need of, the one for his Friend, and the other for himself, and that this was
 “ one reason why they prevailed. Now from hence our Saviour infers, that
 “ God will much more give his holy Spirit to them that ask him, *i. e.* for
 “ such Purposes as are needful, else the Argument will not hold. For we can-
 “ not infer from this Consideration, that we are ready to bestow upon our
 “ Children such Things as they need, that therefore our Heavenly Father will
 “ give his Holy Spirit for such Ends as are needful. If the Demands of Chil-
 “ dren be not within the Bounds of Reason and Modesty; if they ask not to
 “ supply their real Needs, but to gratify their wanton Appetites, it is consistent
 “ with the Goodness of a Parent to deny such Requests, and to rebuke the
 “ Folly of them too. In like manner if we ask those Gifts of the Holy Ghost
 “ which are not needful,” it will not only be consistent with the Goodness of God, but his Wisdom will engage him, to refuse to grant them; for 'tis contrary to the Wisdom of God, to suppose, that he should bestow his Spirit in vain.

§. IV. SUCH Effects therefore as it is needful for the Spirit to work, such, and such only, are the Effects, for the producing of which in the Minds of
 P. 92. Men, God will give his Spirit in all Ages. I say *in all Ages*; for the Fatherly Goodness of God being always the same, and the reason of his giving the Spirit being the Needfulness of it, it follows that God will not in any Age refuse to work such Effects by his Spirit, the working whereof is indeed needful. Now you are to take notice that when I say, that God will in all Ages give his Spirit for the producing such Effects in the Minds of Men, as it is needful
 P. 78. for him to produce, I mean, 1st, that he will by his Spirit produce such Effects as are needful to be produced in order to Salvation. For the Promise of the Spirit being a Branch of the New Covenant, must respect the same general End with the New Covenant it self, “ seeing that which is
 “ the last End of any Covenant, must be the last End of every Part of it.
 “ Now the State which Christ came to bring us to at the last, is that of *seeing*
 “ *God as he is, and living for ever in the Enjoyment of his Love.* For *this is the*
 “ *Promise that he has promised us, even Eternal Life,* 1 John 2. 25. Not as if the

(b) Some Men make a Distinction between *having the Spirit given us*, and being *Partakers of his Gifts and Graces*; and pretend that by *giving the Spirit* is meant, giving the Spirit *himself*, i. e. the *Person* of the Spirit. But besides that it is hard to understand how the Spirit can be given to Men any otherwise than by his Graces, this Conceit is plainly contrary to the Use of that Phrase in the Scripture. For if by *giving of the Spirit* were meant, the giving the *Person* of the Spirit, it would be Nonsense to talk of giving the Spirit in Measure; for the *Person* of the Spirit cannot be given either more or less, but must be given absolutely, as those who plead for this Distinction not only do allow, but earnestly contend. But it is expressly said of Christ, John 3. 34. that *God gave not the Spirit by Measure unto him*; from whence it is evident that the Spirit may be given in Measure; nay, these Words imply, that the Spirit actually was given in Measure to all the Prophets and righteous Men before the coming of Christ. They likewise make a great Stir about the Phrase of *putting the Spirit upon* any one, and pretend not only that it is the *Person* of the Spirit which God is said to put upon Men, but that something more is meant by it than by *giving the Spirit*. But this likewise is a vain Conceit; for it is said, Matth. 12. 18. *I will put my Spirit upon him*, which Words being spoken of Christ, are clearly parallel to God's *giving the Spirit to him*, mentioned John 3. 34. In short, these and the like Expressions are all of them figurative. For because it is the *Person* of the Spirit that bestows his several Gifts, therefore those who receive these Gifts, are by a Metonymy said to receive the Holy Spirit, to have the Spirit *given, sent, poured forth, administered, put upon them*, &c. The ill Use that has been made of this Distinction, made me think it requisite to take this Notice of it. See *Clag.* P. 1. ch. 1. p. 58.

“ Gospel

" Gospel had no other Promises, but that this is the great and ultimate End
 " of the Gospel, to which all other Promises contained therein (and conse-
 " quently that of the Holy Spirit) are only subordinate." Wherefore I say
 those Effects only are to be judged needful to be wrought in us by the Spirit,
 which are needful to be wrought in us with respect or in order to our ever-
 lasting Salvation.

§. V. SECONDLY, When I say that God will in all Ages give the Holy Spirit, P. 85.
 for the producing such Effects as are needful to be produced by him in order
 to Salvation; my Meaning is, not only that he will produce such Effects as are
 absolutely necessary, but also such as it is profitable and advantageous for us
 should be produced in order to Salvation. For Reason tells us, and our Savi-
 our's Argument plainly supposes, " that God in bestowing his Spirit will deal
 " by us with the Kindness and Bounty of a Father." Now we know that
 the Affection of good and tender Parents will carry them to provide for the
 Comfort and Conveniency of their Children, and not suffer them to deal so
 straightly and narrowly with them, as to give them no more than what is bare-
 ly sufficient to keep them from perishing. " Accordingly we may observe, that
 " two of the good things mentioned by our Saviour, which Parents are not wont
 " to deny their Children, *viz.* the *Fish*, and the *Egg*, are Instances of that Food
 " which is not absolutely necessary, but convenient for the Preservation of Life,
 " wherefore the Affection of our heavenly Father being much greater than that
 " of earthly Parents, it may strongly be concluded, that he will not deny us
 " what is profitable, any more than what is necessary to Salvation.

§. VI. * THIS Rule however must not be understood without some Restriction *
 or Limitation, *i. e.* we cannot say universally that the Spirit will in all Ages
 work all such Effects in our Minds, as are profitable to be wrought, as well as
 all that are necessary. For Fact shows that there are many Gifts which would
 doubtless be very good and profitable, which yet the Spirit does not vouchsafe
 in an ordinary way: Nor does this in the least reflect upon the Goodness of our
 heavenly Father; for that Goodness does by no means oblige him to do every
 thing for us, that it is possible for him to do; it is sufficient if he does so much
 as is fit and reasonable to be done, *i. e.* so much as is consistent with his own
 Wisdom, and with those settled Rules by which he has determined to govern
 Mankind. A Man may be a very good Friend, tho' he will not give up all he
 has to the Benefit and Conveniency of his Neighbour; and he is certainly an
 indulgent Father who provides for the Happiness of his Child in a reasonable
 and competent Degree, tho' he be not ready at his Request to resign up to him
 his whole Inheritance. Wherefore this Rule is true only in general and at large.
 The Spirit will in all Ages work such Effects in our Minds, as it is needful for
 him to work under the Notion of profit, as well as under the Notion of Ne-
 cessity: But then how far he will be pleased to go in working profitable Effects,
 depends upon his own Wisdom and good Pleasure, and must therefore be de-
 termined in dubious Cases, not from the Consideration of his Goodness, but
 from his particular Promises, as I shall shew you afterwatds.

§. VII. AND thus I have brought my first Question to a general Conclusion,
 which may be fully expressed by these three Propositions, *viz.* 1. That the
 Spirit will in all Ages work such Effects in the Minds of Men, as it is necessa-
 ry for him to work in them in order to Salvation. 2. That he will also work
 such Effects as are in a reasonable and competent Degree profitable to be wrought
 in them in order to Salvation. 3. That such Effects as are neither necessary nor
 profitable to be wrought in order to Salvation, are none of those Effects, for
 the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give his Spirit in all
 Ages. †

CHAP. II.

A more particular Account of those Effects, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give the Holy Spirit in all Ages.

§. I. **B**UT this general Rule, that the Spirit will in all Ages work such Effects in the Minds of Men, as it is needful for him to work in order to Salvation, will afford but small Light to the present Controversy, * unless it be shewn particularly what those Effects are, * Now for the clearing of this Question, there are two things to be consider'd, viz. The Needfulness of the Effects or Things themselves, and the needfulness of the Spirit's Assistance in order to the producing of these Effects. For seeing (as has been shewn) God gives his Spirit only for such Ends or Purposes as are needful, the Needfulness of any thing to Salvation will not prove it to be an Effect of the Spirit, unless it be shewn that the Assistance of the Spirit be also needful to the causing it in us. Wherefore I shall enquire, First, What things are needful in order to Salvation, Secondly, whether it be needful towards the † Attainment of them, that we have the Assistance of the Spirit. And then, Thirdly, I shall draw some Inferences from the whole, which I hope will fully decide the present Question. †

P. 79. §. II. FIRST I am to inquire what things are needful in order to Salvation. In doing which, I shall proceed according to my former Distinction of needful into things necessary, and things only profitable. Now the things which are necessary in order to Salvation "may all of them be comprized under these Four Heads, viz. 1. Faith in Jesus Christ, or the believing him to be the Son of God, and so one upon whose Authority he may safely rely, as to whatever Revelations he has made of the Divine Will. 2. So much Knowledge of the Christian Doctrines (which is Faith in another Notion) as is necessary to instruct us in, and incourage us to that Repentance and Holiness, which the Gospel requires to qualify us for Salvation. 3. All those Vertues which make up practical Christianity, and consist in having our Minds set free from the Dominion of all sensual and worldly Lusts, and in sincere Obedience to the Commandments of Christ. 4. After we are brought to this State, it is equally necessary to our eternal Salvation, that we persevere therein. I know not of any thing absolutely necessary to Salvation, which is not plainly implied under, and may not readily be deduced from (c) some of these. Some indeed will pretend that there is one Qualification of quite another Kind than any I have named, absolutely necessary to Salvation, and that you must know is REGENERATION." Now that Regeneration is absolutely necessary to qualify us for eternal Life, I readily grant, but * that it is any thing distinct from Faith and Obedience, I utterly deny. * To discuss this Point in this Place wou'd be too great an Interruption to the Thread of my Discourse, and therefore I shall reserve it to be spoken to at a more † proper season. †

P. 81. §. III. As to those things which are only profitable to Salvation, "they are

(c) I shall in the Sequel of this Discourse frequently speak of the necessary Conditions of Salvation, under those two general Terms *Faith* and *Obedience*, which do undoubtedly contain them all. For *Faith* taken in its whole Latitude, i. e. as it respects every thing which is the Object of our Belief, does certainly comprehend *Knowledge*, because a Man must know what he is to believe, before he can believe it. And *Perseverance* is not any thing essentially distinct from those Vertues which make up Practical Christianity; or, which is all one, from *Obedience*, but only a Mode or Circumstance belonging to it; for 'tis only preserving those Vertues entire, which we have once attained unto. But the former Enumeration, tho' in Strictness of Method it be somewhat superfluous, is yet true, and withal it was more commodious for our Authors Design, as will be seen in going along.

“ such as regard our Improvement either in Goodness or in Knowledge. Of
 “ the former sort are those Degrees of Goodness, according to which sincere
 “ Christians, who are all careful to avoid wilful Sin, and endeavour to grow
 “ in Grace, do yet excel one another. These Degrees consist in being more
 “ or less free from Sins of mere infirmity, an absolute Freedom from which, is
 “ that which our Condition in this World will not admit of: But every De-
 “ gree towards Perfection, which Men attain unto in this Kind, must certain-
 “ ly be so much the more profitable, by how much the greater it is: For 1st.
 “ We are the better able to conclude certainly of our spiritual Estate which is
 “ a matter of great Comfort and Advantage in the Course of a godly Life.
 “ 2dly; The nearer we come to Perfection, the less Danger are we in of
 “ falling back into evil Practices. 3dly, The more perfect we are, the greater
 “ shall our Reward be in Heaven, for *God will judge every Man according to*
 “ *his Works*; and therefore they that have done better, shall have a better
 “ Reward. The latter Sort of profitable Qualifications, are such Degrees of
 “ Knowledge in Divine Things, as are not simply necessary to Salvation.
 “ The more Knowledge a Christian has, the better able he is to avoid all
 “ dangerous Errors, and thus that Knowledge which is not absolutely neces-
 “ sary, may be profitable to himself. Likewise, the more a Man understands
 “ of Religion, the more useful he may be to others, in promoting their Sal-
 “ vation, by rescuing them from Mistakes, removing Doubts, and many other
 “ Ways.

§. IV. THESE are the several Things or Qualifications which are need-
 ful in order to Salvation. And these Qualifications, (as Experience shows)
 Men do ordinarily attain unto, and most assuredly will attain unto, even
 unto the end of the World. I come now to inquire, Secondly, Whether
 it be needful in order to our Attainment of these Qualifications, that we
 have the Assistance of the Spirit. I begin with Faith, as that signifies a firm P. 161.
 persuasion of the Truth of our Saviour's Doctrines; in order whereto,
 there are three things required, viz. 1. That the Doctrines of the Gospel
 be clearly proposed to the Understanding. 2. That there be sufficient Evi-
 dence of their being divinely revealed. 3. That the Mind be prepared, fit-
 ted, or disposed to discern, and be wrought upon by this Evidence. * The *
 two former Prerequisites will signify very little without the latter: For let
 the Doctrines of the Gospel be never so clearly proposed to the Understanding;
 and let the Arguments by which they are proved to be from God, be never so
 strong and convincing, yet will they not convince those who are either careless,
 and will not consider them at all, or in whom these Arguments, by any
 Impediment either natural or acquir'd, are hindred from having their due Force
 or Effect upon the Mind. † Now I do not suppose that 'tis needful for the †
 Spirit in these Days to reveal the Doctrines of the Gospel by immediate Inspira- P. 162.
 tion; nor yet that he should give any immediate Testimony or Evidence that they 163.
 are Divine Revelations; these Things, I say, I do not suppose or believe, for
 Reasons that shall hereafter be taken notice of: But then I do suppose and
 shall undertake to prove, that the Assistance of the Spirit is necessary to prepare
 Men's Hearts, and put them into a fit Temper and Disposition to embrace the
 Gospel, when proposed to them with sufficient Evidence.

§. V. And this I think is plain from the Words of our Saviour, *John vi. 44.* P. 168.
*No Man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.**
 For by *coming* to Christ, in this Place, we are evidently to understand *believing*
 on him; for our Saviour was here talking with the unbelieving Jews, and these
 Words assign the Reason of their Infidelity. Now what it is to be *drawn* of
 the Father, we are informed in the Verse immediately following: *It is written*
in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God: every one therefore that hath
heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me: So that to be *drawn* of the
 Father,

Father, is the same thing with being *taught of God*, with *hearing* and *learning of the Father*. Now 1. By being *taught of God*, and *hearing* and *learning of the Father*, cannot be meant the having those external Means of Instruction afforded them, which were necessary in order to their believing, for they had heard the Doctrines of our Saviour, and seen his Miracles. (*verse* 26, 36.) In this Sense therefore they were already taught of God, which yet our Saviour's Argument supposes them not to have been. Nor, 2. can these Phrases import their being effectually wrought upon by those external Means which were afforded by the preaching of the Gospel. For the End or Effect proposed by these external Means, is believing; by consequence to believe in Christ, and to be effectually wrought upon by those Means which are afforded by the preaching of the Gospel, are one and the same thing; by consequence therefore our Saviour could not in this Sense have alledged to the *Jews* their not being *drawn of the Father*, or *taught of God*, as the reason why they believed not. † Wherefore, 3. These Phrases must denote some Divine Grace or Assistance, previously necessary to fit and prepare Men's Minds for the Reception of the Gospel; * and upon this Supposition the Connexion of our Saviour's Discourse will be most clear and accurate. For he had just before declared himself to be *the Bread of Life which came down from Heaven* (*ver.* 32, 33, 34.) At this the *Jews* were offended, and murmured, saying, *Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph, whose Father and Mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from Heaven?* (*ver.* 41, 42.) To this *Jesus* answers, *Murmur not among your selves: No Man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.* As if he had said, Ye have no reason to be offended at what I say; my Doctrine is true, and the Ground of your Unbelief is not because ye have not sufficient means of Conviction, but because, through your Obstinacy, the Grace of God hath not effectually prepared you for it; hath not wrought in you that Frame and Temper of Mind, without which no Man can indeed believe in me, and which whosoever hath, will become my Disciple. † To the same purpose he speaks, *ver.* 37. *All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me*, i. e. they, and they only, whom the Father giveth me; for thus he expresses it, *ver.* 65. *No Man can come unto me, except it be given him of the Father*, i. e. unless the Grace of God has aforehand fitted and disposed him to believe. * For to be *given* of the Father signifies the same thing with *being drawn* of the Father, as appears from what goes before, where our Saviour having observed that *there were some of them that believed not*, immediately adds, *Therefore I said unto you, that no Man can come unto me, except it be given him of the Father*; which clearly shews that these Words are only a Rehearsal of what he had said, *ver.* 44, viz. *No Man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.* And thus you see that the preventing Grace of God, i. e. the Assistance of the Divine Spirit, fitting and disposing our Minds to be wrought upon by that Evidence which the Gospel carries along with it, is necessary to believing. † Of which preventing Grace we have a remarkable Instance *Acts* P. 160. 16. 14. where it is recorded of *Lydia*, that *the Lord opened her Heart, that she attended to the Things which were spoken of Paul.* We may observe here that *Lydia's* being qualified to hear, which is expressed by the *opening of her Heart*, is ascribed to a Divine Operation which went before even her Attention to what she heard; and the Consequence hereof was, that she believed and was baptized.

* §. VI. * WHAT this Frame or Temper of Mind is, by which Men are qualified to believe, and for the producing whereof the Assistance of the Spirit is necessary, will be shewn more properly under the second general Question. † † Wherefore I proceed to prove that the Assistance of the Spirit is also needful towards the Attainment of the rest of the above mentioned Qualifications, viz. Knowledge, Obedience, Perseverance, and all manner of Improvements both in Knowledge and in Goodness. * And that I may cut this Matter as short as possible, I shall lay down these two following Rules, viz. 1. That to pray for any

any thing, supposes the Needfulness of the thing prayed for; that therefore all those Places of Scripture wherein we are either taught to pray for the Spirit, or wherein the Spirit is actually prayed for by any of the inspired Writers in the behalf of common Christians, are so many plain Proofs that the Assistance of the Spirit is needful for us. † 2. That to pray for any Grace or Vertue, * when none of the external Means of it are wanting, † is in effect to pray for the Spirit. * For this is evidently praying for some Degree of Power or Strength from God, beyond that which he has naturally endued us with, which (in the present Question) is the very thing we mean by the Divine Assistance, or the Assistance of the Spirit. Wherefore seeing that to pray for the Spirit supposes the Needfulness of his Assistance; and seeing we pray for the Spirit's Assistance when we pray for any Grace or Vertue, none of the external Means being wanting; it follows that all those Places of Scripture, where any common Graces or Vertues are either prayed for, or commanded to be prayed for, are plain Proofs that in order to the Attainment of such Graces or Vertues, the Assistance of the Spirit is needful. †

§. VII. THESE Things being premised, I say that the Assistance of the Spirit is needful in order to Knowledge. For St. James enjoins, that *if any Man lacketh Wisdom, he should ask of God, — and it shall be given him*, St. James i. 5. And St. Paul prays for the Christians of those Times, *that they might be filled with the Knowledge of God's Will in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding*, Coloss. i. 9, 10. * Now both the Epistle of St. James and that of St. Paul was directed to those who were already become Christians, and lived under the immediate Care and Instruction of the first Planters of the Gospel; by consequence neither those whom the former bad to pray for Knowledge, nor those in Behalf of whom the latter actually prayed for it, could be in any want of those external Means which were necessary in order thereunto. † By the same Argument it may be proved, that the Assistance of the Spirit is also needful to Obedience; for we are taught in the Lord's Prayer to desire of God that his *Will may be done on Earth as it is in Heaven, i. e.* “that we may be disposed to such a submissive and chearful Obedience to the Will of God, as may bear some Resemblance, and carry some Proportion, to that absolute Readiness of Mind, wherewith the Angels and *Spirits of just Men made perfect* do perform the Will of God in the Kingdom of Heaven.” We are taught also to pray *that we may not enter into Temptation, that we may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil*, and the like. * Now these Directions being designed for Christians in all Ages, must suppose the Presence of all proper external Means, and do consequently prove that some Strength beyond what is natural, is needful to enable us to overcome Temptations, and to live in Obedience to the Divine Will.

§. VIII. BUT that the assistance of the Spirit is needful (even in the Degree of Necessity) to enable us to obey the Will of God, need not be proved by way of Consequence, seeing our Saviour has asserted it in express Terms, “† For thus he speaks to his Disciples, *John 15. 5. Without me ye can do nothing, i. e.* no good thing. But he did not suppose that they were incapable of doing any thing *with* him too, but that they had Power to bring forth Fruit unto God, and that it was from him. Now that this Power imparted to them, was not meerly the Effect of the Revelation of his Doctrine, is plain from hence, that they had already believed the Revelations he had made: *Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you* (ver. 3.) And yet he tells them that *without him they can do nothing*; which therefore must needs imply some Grace distinct from the bare Revelation of the Gospel, by which they had already bore some Fruit, and were to be enabled to bring forth more.” * Again, in his Discourse to Nicodemus, recorded *John 3.* he tells them,

them, that *except a Man be born again, i. e. (d)* become his obedient Disciple, he cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven (ver. 3.) Now that the Assistance of the Spirit is necessary to our being born again, is evident from ver. 5. where he declares, that *except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* † A Man must, 1. be born of Water, i. e. he must be baptized with Water; and then, 2. he must be born of the Spirit, i. e. it is equally necessary that by the Operations of the Holy Spirit he become obedient in Heart and Life to the Commandments of Christ. * To these Words are exactly parallel those of St. Paul, Tit. 3. 5, 6. *He hath saved us by the Washing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he hath shed on us abundantly thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour.* Here likewise our Salvation is ascribed to two things, viz. 1. *The Washing of Regeneration*, which answers the being born of Water; and, 2. *The renewing of the Holy Ghost*, which answers to the being born of the Spirit, and signifies that inward Influence or Operation of the Holy Ghost, by which we become as it were new Men, having our Natures changed from Evil to Good, and so living in sincere Obedience to the Divine Will. For that we cannot attain to that Purity and Holiness which will be well-pleasing to God, without the Assistance of the Spirit, the same Apostle has expressly affirmed, Rom. 8. 8, 9. *They, says he, that are in the Flesh cannot please God.* Now to be *in the Flesh*, is to be in Subjection to our Lusts and Carnal Appetites; as on the other hand to be *in the Spirit*, is to tame and subdue them. But how is it that we are *in the Spirit*? Why, the Apostle tells us, *Now ye are not in the Flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.* In order therefore to tame and subdue our Lusts and Carnal Appetites, i. e. to obey the Will of God, we must have the Spirit of God dwelling in us. For if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, i. e. he cannot be Christ's sincere Disciple, as the Apostle proceeds. Again, ver. 13, 14. *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through or by the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the Sons of God.* In which Words the necessity of the Spirit's Assistance, in order to the mortifying the Deeds of the Body, and becoming the Children of God, is so plainly asserted, that nothing can be plainer. †

P. 172. §. IX. AND as the Assistance of the Divine Spirit is needful to bring us at
174 first to a holy and Christian Conversation, so it is also needful in order to our Perseverance, and Improvement afterwards. For St. Paul prays for the Ephesians, that God would grant unto them to be strengthened with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man, Eph. 3. 14, 16. For the Thessalonians, that he would establish their Hearts unblameable in Holiness, 1 Thess. 3. 13. That he would comfort their Hearts, and establish them in every good Word and Work, 2 Thess. 2. 17. That he would make them increase and abound in Love towards one another, and towards all Men, 1 Thess. 3. 12. For the Philippians, that their Love might abound yet more and more in all Knowledge, and in all Judgment; that they might approve Things that are excellent, being filled with the Fruits of Righteousness, Phil. 1. 9, 10, 11. To the same purpose is that Prayer, Heb. 13. 21. *The God of Peace make you perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his Sight.* All these Prayers, I say, and many more of the same sort, which may be met with in the New Testament, do abundantly prove that the Assistance of the Spirit is needful to Perseverance, and also to our Improvement both in Knowledge and in Goodness. * I confess indeed they do not prove it to be needful in the Sense of Necessity, because the Assistance of the Spirit may very rationally be prayed for, upon Supposition that it is no more than profitable. But we are to remember once more, that our Saviour has told us, that *without him we can do nothing*; which Assertion being

(d) That this is the true Meaning of being born again, see proved at large in the Discourse of Regeneration.

versal, must extend to every Act of Godliness; and in reason one would suppose, that if the Assistance of the Spirit be necessary (as it has been shewn to be) to the first Beginnings of a good Mind, and the lowest Degrees of Holiness, it must be much more necessary to the constant Continuance in well doing, and to all those higher Steps which lead to Perfection.

§. X. AND now, I think, we may draw some Inferences, which will fully determine the Question in hand, *viz.* What those Effects are, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give his holy Spirit in all Ages. For seeing (as has been shewn) God will in all Ages give the Holy Spirit, for the working such Effects in us as it is necessary for him to work, in order to our Salvation; seeing Faith, Obedience, and Perseverance, are Qualifications necessary to Salvation, and which Men ordinarily do, and always will attain unto; and seeing we cannot believe in Christ, nor constantly keep his Commandments, without the Spirit's Assistance, it follows plainly that Faith, Obedience, and perseverance, are Effects for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give his Spirit in all Ages. Again, seeing (as has also been proved) God will in all Ages bestow his Spirit, to work such Effects as are in a competent and reasonable Degree profitable to be wrought in us, in order to Salvation; it follows, that if it be in a competent and reasonable Degree profitable for us that the Spirit should assist us to improve in Knowledge and in Goodness, that such Improvements are likewise Effects, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give his Spirit in all Ages. Now that it is profitable that the Spirit should effect these Improvements in us, will not, I suppose, be doubted; and that it is competently and reasonably so may easily be proved. For that is competently and reasonably profitable, which is not too profitable for us reasonably to expect. Now 1st. It is very reasonable to expect that Men should, and it is certain that they will, in all Ages, improve and grow in Knowledge and in Goodness, as is evident. 2^{dly}, It is also very reasonable to expect that the Spirit should assist Men in these Improvements; because, as I have shewn, the Assistance of the Spirit is necessary to these Improvements. But supposing it were granted that the Assistance of the Spirit is only profitable to these Improvements, yet if it be competently profitable, it will still follow that these Improvements are Effects, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give his Spirit in all Ages. Now that it is competently profitable, that the Spirit should assist us to improve, is evident, because God has taught us to pray that we may improve, which most assuredly he would never have done, had the Assistance of his Spirit to this End been a thing unreasonable for us to ask, or what he had not determined, upon our asking, to bestow upon us. This Argument is irrefragable, and proves, not only consequentially, but directly, † that Obedience, Knowledge, and all manner of Improvements, are the ordinary Effects of the Spirit of God. For certainly it were a vain thing for us to pray our selves, or for others to pray in our Behalf, if God had left the Success of the Gospel to depend barely upon external Means, *i. e.* if there were not some Divine Assistance obtainable thereby, for the producing those Qualifications which we pray to him for. If to pray for any Grace or Vertue, be the same thing as to pray for the Spirit, then to give any Grace or Vertue, is the same thing as to give the Spirit. Now God, by teaching us that all Vertues and Graces, both necessary and profitable, ought to be the Subject of our Prayers, does at the same time inform us, that he will grant these Graces or Vertues upon our asking for them, *i. e.* he directly assures us, that they are Effects, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, he will give his Spirit in all Ages. Accordingly, the Scriptures have not only taught us to pray for these Graces, but expressly ascribed them wheresoever they are, to a Divine Assistance, clearly distinct from the Revelation of the Gospel. Thus with respect to Obedience, "St. Paul † tells the *Philippians*, *It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do ac-* P. 172.
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“according to his good Pleasure. Phil. ii. 13. Which Words being spoken to Believers, do manifestly suppose a Divine Operation distinct from the Revelation of the Gospel, which enables them to will and to do, *i.e.* to perform that Obedience from their very Souls, which would qualify them for eternal Happiness.” * The same Apostle also ascribes Perseverance to a Divine Power, Rom. 16. 25. and 2 Thes. iii. 3. where he says, *the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from Evil.* † Finally, all Improvement in Grace and Goodness are ascribed to a Divine Operation, John xv. 20. where our Saviour tells us, that *every Branch in him that bringeth forth Fruit, God purgeth it that it may bring forth more Fruit, and Philip. i. 6. where St. Paul declares how strongly he was persuaded that God who had begun a good Work in them, would finish it until the Day of Jesus Christ.* And thus you see that in the whole Progress of a Christian Life, from the Beginning to the Completion thereof, *our Sufficiency is of God, who giveth us of his Spirit.* * Wherefore to conclude; seeing those Effects, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give his Spirit in all Ages, are limited to such Effects only as it is needful for him to work in us in order to our Salvation; and seeing no Effect can be needful to be wrought in us by the Spirit in order to Salvation, unless it be either necessary or profitable to Salvation; since likewise the Qualifications necessary to Salvation, are only Faith and Obedience, and the profitable Qualifications must regard our Improvement either in Knowledge or in Goodness; it follows plainly that these are the only Effects, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give his Spirit in all Ages, *i.e.* that God will not ordinarily assist Men by his Spirit any farther, than that they may believe in his Word, keep his Commandments, increase in Knowledge, and in those Vertues which are the Ornament and Perfection of a Christian Mind. †

§. XI. I HAVE now dispatch'd, as briefly as I could, the first General Question, *viz.* What those Effects are, for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give his Spirit in all Ages; and from what has been said we may observe, 1. That he who believes in Christ, and sincerely keeps his Commandments, hath the Spirit of God; for it is the Effect of his Grace, and to say that a Man may do this, and yet be void of Grace, is to contradict the Scriptures, which ascribe Faith and Obedience, in whomsoever they are, to the Operations of the Holy Spirit. Wherefore, 2. It is an idle Supposition, that God will be displeased with us, tho' we are never so careful to keep his Commandments, and to increase in all Christian Vertues, if all this while we have not the Spirit of God; for the former cannot be without the latter, Wherefore also, 3. It is a vain thing to make our believing and obeying the Gospel on the one hand, and our having true Grace on the other, distinct Marks of a regenerate State. * For I have already observed, and shall prove (*e*) afterwards, that to be Regenerate signifies the having our Tempers or dispositions changed, from Evil to Good. Now 1. This Change does necessarily suppose that we have Grace, because it is the Effect of Grace. 2. This Change is the only Mark by which we may know that we have Grace; for the Grace of God (as I shall also (*f*) prove hereafter) is an imperceptible Operation, and cannot be discerned any otherwise than by the Effect it has upon our Minds, 3. Faith and Obedience are the only Marks by which we can judge of this inward Change; for then only we may be assured that we are inwardly reformed, when we believe in Christ, and keep his Commandments. Wherefore, 4. Faith and Obedience are the only Marks of a regenerate State; and consequently, the having true Grace is of it self no Mark of a regenerate State at all, but our being regenerate a Mark of that. †

(*e*) See again the Discourse of Regeneration.

(*f*) See Chap. 7.

CHAP. III.

What the Spirit does towards producing the foregoing Effects.

* **H**AVING shown you that Faith and Obedience are the only Effects, *
 for the producing of which in the Minds of Men, God will give his Holy Spirit in all Ages; I come now to consider what the Spirit does in order thereunto; which being the Point whereupon the greatest and most considerable Differences among Christians do arise, it is therefore the more necessary that it should be rightly determined. As to the former Question, we have, I think, no Dispute with any but the *Pelagians*; but here we have Numbers of Adversaries to encounter with, who have introduced Notions not only absurd and groundless in themselves, but dangerous to the Souls of Men, and destructive of the Christian Religion in general. My Business therefore shall be, first of all, to lay down what I think to be the true Work of the Spirit in bringing us to Faith and Obedience; and then to state and examine into the Opinions of others upon the same Subject. †

§. II. Now the Work of the Spirit in bringing us to Faith and Obedience, in Part II.
P. 68, 69. general, I take to be this, *viz.* the enduing us with certain Moral Qualifications, necessary to dispose, fit, or prepare us thereunto. That some Preparation of Mind is necessary towards embracing the Gospel, I have in part already shown you, and is farther "evident, from the Parable of the *Seed* sown upon different " Sorts of Ground, (*Matt. 13.*) by which is meant, the Gospel preached to " Persons of various Dispositions. For the Reason why the Seed was fruitful " in one Place, and not in another, is there clearly supposed to be the Difference of the Places upon which it fell, the *good Ground* being that only which " yielded Increase. Now as only the prepared Ground brought forth Fruit, " and as the Preparedness of the Ground consisted in its own Goodness; so also " there is some Preparedness of the Mind it self, necessary to qualify us to " understand, believe, and keep the Word, when externally proposed to us. " Again; that this Preparedness of Mind consists of some Moral Qualification, " is evident from *Luke 8. 15.* where that which answers to the good Ground " in the Parable, is (Christ himself being his own Interpreter) *an honest and " good Heart,*" which undoubtedly is a Moral Qualification. Now 1. That this honest and good Heart is all that is required to qualify us to embrace the Gospel when proposed to us, the Parable plainly supposes, and our Saviour expressly affirms; for he says of those *who hear the Word in an honest and good Heart,* that they *keep it, and bring forth Fruit with Patience.* Wherefore 2. The Assistance of the Spirit must be needful in order to the acquiring this honest and good Heart; and consequently, wherever it is, it must be an Effect of the Spirit's Operations. * For an honest and good Heart being all that is necessary to qualify us to believe and obey the Gospel, it follows that if the Assistance of the Spirit were not needful to an honest and good Heart, it would not be needful to Faith and Obedience; which is contrary to what has been already proved. 3. Seeing an honest and good Heart is all that is needful to qualify us to believe and obey the Gospel when proposed to us, it may reasonably be presumed that the enduing us with this honest and good Heart, is all that the Spirit does in order to bring us to Faith and Obedience; because in Reason it cannot be expected that the Spirit should do more than what is sufficient for the effecting those things for which he operates.

§. III. ALL this being granted (and I think it cannot fairly be denied) nothing will be wanting towards determining the present Question, but to find out what this honest and good Heart means. † In order whereunto, it will be proper to observe, 1. That whatever Moral Endowments are any where in the

Gospel particularly noted by our Saviour, as necessary to bring us to Faith and Obedience, or can be rationally proved to be necessary, all such Moral Endowments must be comprehended under [an honest and good Heart; because otherwise an honest and good Heart would not be sufficient, as our Saviour affirms it to be. 2. * That these Endowments being once found out, if it can be proved that they are also sufficient to lead us to Faith and Obedience, it will then follow, that they must make up the whole of what our Saviour means by an honest and good Heart, because otherwise these Endowments would not be sufficient, something else included under an honest and good Heart being still supposed to be necessary. Wherefore I shall inquire, First, What Moral Endowments our Saviour has particularly noted in the Gospel, as necessary to bring us to Faith and Obedience. Secondly, I shall further shew from Reason, the Necessity, and Thirdly, The Sufficiency of them. †

P 70. §. IV. FIRST, I shall inquire what Moral Endowments our Saviour has particularly noted in the Gospel, as necessary to bring us to Faith and Obedience: and these, I think, may be reduced to two, viz. 1. "A meek and humble Spirit, which comprehends Teachableness in the Understanding, and Tractableness in the Will; by the former of which, a Man is prepared to yield to the Truth, tho' it prove contrary to his present Opinions; and by the latter, to submit to any Divine Law, tho' it prove contrary to his former Practices. There is no good Disposition of Mind which our Lord takes more Notice of than this, and honours with more Testimonies of his Approbation. Thus when he invites the Guilty to come unto him, *Matt. xi. 29.* he says, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly*, intimating, that the first Vertue wherein they were to imitate him, if they would become his Disciples, was that of Humility: So *Mark x. 14.* where taking up the *little Children* into his Arms, he gives this Reason for his so doing: *For of such is the Kingdom of Heaven, i. e. of such who are like these, gentle, pliable, and easy to learn. Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little Child, he shall not enter therein, i. e. whoever is not prepared by a meek and flexible Disposition, will never embrace the Gospel.*" Accordingly, our Saviour mentions the want of this teachable Disposition as the main Reason why some of the *Jews* believed not in him, *John x. 25.* "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my Sheep; where by Sheep cannot be meant actual Disciples, (for then the Sense were, Ye believe not, because ye believe not) but such as were by a teachable Spirit disposed to be so, and would hear his Voice: So *John viii. 47.* He that is of God heareth God's Words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. Now what it is to be of God, we may learn from *ver. 44.* Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the Lusts of your Father ye will do. So that to be of the Devil, is to be wedded to our Lusts, and enraged against the Truth that contradicts them, and therefore the contrary State, to be of God, is plainly to be ready to perform all Duty, and to believe all Truth.

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§. V. SECONDLY, The other Moral Endowment which our Saviour desired to find in Men, in order to qualify them to embrace the Gospel, is "a just Esteem and Concern for the End of Christianity, viz. Life Everlasting." This is evident from hence, viz. "That the Promise of Everlasting Life, was that Motive which he ever used to commend his Doctrine with, and by which he always went about to win the Attention of his Hearers, as any one must have observed who has read the Scriptures with an ordinary Care. And there was great Reason for it; for the Promise of eternal Life, being the great and leading Motive of the Gospel, according as Men are affected with that Promise, so they will be profitable or unprofitable Hearers of God's Word, as I shall presently shew you. To this Purpose our Saviour asks the *Jews*, *John v. 44.* "How can ye believe who receive Honour from one another, and seek not the Honour that cometh from God alone? i. e. so long as your Hearts are

“are set upon worldly Greatness and the Praise of Men, which if ye can compass, you care not whether God approves of you or not; it is no wonder that ye reject my Doctrine, who came not to answer your ambitious and worldly Expectations. Thus the Apostle tells us, that *the God of this World had blinded the Minds of those who believed not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. where we have a plain Reason given us, why some believed not who had the Light of the Gospel shining about them, *i. e.* who had the Gospel preached to them, with its proper Evidence, *viz.* Because *the God of this World had blinded their Minds, i. e.* they were blinded with the Prejudices of prevailing Lust and Passion, by which the Devil rules in the Children of Disobedience.” It appears then, that Meekness, *i. e.* a teachable and tractable Disposition, together with a serious Concern for everlasting Life, are, in the Judgment of our Saviour, Endowments very needful to qualify Men to become his Disciples. And now, though in all Reason this ought to be look’d upon as a sufficient Proof that they are really so; yet because it is a Matter of great Importance, I shall in the Second Place make use of some rational Arguments, which will fully demonstrate the Needfulness of both these Qualifications, as well with relation to Faith as Practice.

§. VI. I BEGIN with the first of these Qualifications, *viz.* a teachable and tractable Disposition, which is needful, 1. In order to Faith, as it signifies a firm Persuasion that Jesus was a Prophet sent from God, and that all his Doctrines are true, “For it is considerable that only the Meek and Teachable Spirit is suited to that way of Conviction, in which the Gospel is propounded to us. Had the Doctrine of Jesus Christ been demonstrated to us with such Evidence, as must have forced the Assent of every Man, Faith had not been rewardable; as on the other Hand, if the Proof thereof had not been certain and sufficient to determine a wise Man, Infidelity had not been punishable. Now God in his Wisdom has given us the latter Evidence, but not the former; and therefore though Christianity needs not that Men should be foolishly credulous, since the Evidence thereof will bear a fair Trial, and is sufficient to remove all Ground of reasonable doubting; yet we must desire them to consider it without Prejudice or Passion, since it is not of that Nature as to force any Man’s Assent, who is not willing to learn.”* A meek, humble, and disinterested Man, as he will find enough in the Christian Religion to make him believe it to be true; so he that is proud and conceited of his own false Opinions, will find many things at which he may easily stumble: For such a Man is prejudged against the Truth, before he undertakes to examine it, which if it doth not prevent him from considering of it at all, will at least † hinder him from attending seriously to the Force of those Arguments upon which it stands, and incline him to lean to the weakest Objections that can be made against it. We have a remarkable Instance of this in the great Men among the Jews, John 9. where we find that “when our Saviour had opened the Eyes of one that was born blind, the Pharisees would believe never the more that he was of God: And yet all the Pretence they could find against him, was no more than this, *viz.* that the Cure was wrought on the Sabbath Day.” A pitiful Shift, you will say, to evade the Force of so great a Miracle! And yet this was really the Case. “For when they had strictly examined into all the Circumstances of the Miracle, and the healed Person in Conclusion talk’d such unanswerable Reason against them; *Herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not whence he is, &c.* If this Man were not of God, he could do nothing, *i. e.* he could do no such Works as these; they were resolved to give him the hearing no longer, but first bitterly reproached him, and then cast him out.”* Thus it happened that the Gospel became to the Jews a stumbling Block, and for the same Reason, it was to the Greeks Foolishness; for these were as much conceited of their false and vain Philosophy, as the others were tenacious of their ancient Rites and Ceremonies;

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Part I.
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monies; and this gave them such a Disgust to the Christian Religion, that the most light and frivolous Exceptions on the one Hand, easily over-ballanced the most weighty Demonstrations on the other. Now if Meekness and a teachable Disposition were so requisite, when the Truth of our Saviour's Doctrines shone forth in the Miracles which he wrought before the Faces of his Enemies, how much more needful must they be in these Days, when though Christianity indeed stands upon the same Evidence, yet that Evidence is propounded to us after a manner far less convincing? † " It is true indeed, that there is no more
" required to gain an understanding Man's Assent to a true Proposition in
" Philosophy, than to explain the Meaning, and represent the Reasons of it
" to him intelligibly and clearly. This is ordinarily sufficient in that Case:
" But there is more required towards the Belief of the Gospel, though pro-
" pounded with sufficient Evidence of Divine Revelation. For there is this
" Difference between the Truths of Religion, and Conclusions in natural Phi-
" losophy, and other Sciences, *viz.* That our sensual Appetites, and worldly
" Interests, are thwarted by those, but not by these; and therefore we are not
" so apt to rise up in Contradiction to the latter, as we are to the former, though
" they may be both proved with equal Evidence. Religion is to govern our
" Lives, and bindeth us to deny the Pleasures and Advantages of Sin, under
" the Penalty of God's High Displeasure. No Wonder then if the Lusts of
" Men influence their Judgments, and byass their Understandings against the
" Belief of those Doctrines which are so irreconcilable to a wicked Life.
" Wherefore as Faith is necessary towards that more perfect Victory over
" our Lusts, which includes the universal doing of God's Will; so on the
" other Hand, our Minds must in some Degree be disengaged from the Power
" of our Lusts, before we can heartily believe, *viz.* so far as that we may be
" ready to yield to the Truth, how contrary soever it proves to our worldly
" and sensual Affections, and consequently, that they shall not hinder our At-
" tention and Consideration, when the Word of God is offer'd to be made
" known to us.

* §. VII. SECONDLY, A meek and teachable Disposition is also needful in order to Knowledge. * For as the Evidence whereupon the Christian Religion is built, is not suited to convince those who are unwilling to be convinced; so neither are its particular Doctrines so indisputably clear, as to force the Assent of those who are not willing to understand. There must be a tractable disinterested Spirit in the one Case as well as in the other, God having in his Wisdom so ordered it, that though there be enough to stop the Mouths of Gain-sayers, and leave them inexcusable, yet there is also room left for those to merit Praise and Reward, who profess and hold fast the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus. There is scarce any Point of Christian Knowledge so plain and perspicuous, as not to afford some Ground for Cavils to those who are over nice and scrupulous; which though they can be of little Weight with Men who judge of things calmly and impartially, may yet appear very considerable to those who are prejudged in Favour of them, by the Prevalency of some darling and favourite Opinion. A little matter will persuade us to believe that to be true, which we are afore-hand willing and desirous should be so; for Prepossession has the same Influence over us here, as it has in all other Cases; it magnifies every Blemish and Imperfection in those Things which we have no liking to, and as much diminishes them in those which we approve and are fond of, so that a seeming Difficulty in an Opinion which we care not to own, will oftentimes weigh more with us, than many real ones, in another which we are inclinable to entertain. The Reason of this Disparity seems chiefly to lye in the different Degrees of Intensity, wherewith the Mind applies it self to consider in both Cases. Prejudice increases our Diligence on the one hand, and our Negligence on the other. It takes off the Mind (as has just now been observed) from seriously weighing and examining into the Force of those

those Arguments upon which the Truth is established, and inclines it to listen and adhere to whatever Objections are offered in order to weaken and overthrow it. Now as in natural Bodies, a small Moment, by being frequently and forcibly urged, may be made to act with more Efficacy than a much greater, if it be but seldom applied, and comes with lesser Degrees of Velocity: So with respect to the Mind, the Assent is more easily won by weak Arguments which it always dwells upon, and applies with all their Force, than by strong and plain Proofs, which either are seldom consider'd of at all, or passed over in a light and perfunctory manner. 'Tis from this Source that we are to derive that mighty influence, which Custom and Education has in governing the Sentiments of Mankind. There is nothing which proud Nature is so much offended at, as the viewing its own Weakness and Imperfections. This makes us loath to part with Opinions which we have once imbibed, and made familiar to our selves; and thus we are "† infected with a secret Disloyalty to the Truth, " which frequently perverts our Judgments, and directs our Labours to a wrong " End.* This is true in all Matters of Speculation, but more especially in those where Religion is concerned. No Man loves to have his Judgment arraigned in things of the greatest Consequence, however he may bear with it in smaller Matters. Here therefore we are most of all inclined to be sturdy and resolute; to deceive others into our own Opinions, rather than be undeceived our selves. This puts us upon using all those little Arts which either our Wit or Learning is able to supply us with, in order to support those Errors which we have once entertained. If a Text does but sound a little musically in our Ears, we wring and screw it till it cracks again, but we will have it up to our own Pitch; whilst in the mean time others, which, cou'd we but think so, are much better tuned, are either not so much as touch'd upon, or if they be, are forced to such unnatural Sounds, as render the whole Proportion dissonant and unharmonious——But I need not enlarge upon this Subject; Experience shews how hard it is for those to distinguish well between Truth and Falshood, whose Minds are overborn with false and unreasonable Prejudices. What wretched Work do such as these make with the sacred Oracles of Truth, by quoting them partially, applying them incongruously, and perverting their genuine Sense by artificial Turns, and forced Interpretation! The Reader may meet with some particular Instances of this Kind in the latter Part of this Discourse; in the mean time, what has been said may be sufficient to shew, how necessary it is in order to a right Faith, that Men be endued with a free and ingenuous Disposition of Mind. A Disposition which leaves them open to Instruction; which causes them to set aside all sinister Views, and to come to the Fountain of Knowledge with a Thirst after Truth: A Disposition which makes them sensible how easy it is for them to be mistaken, and not ashamed to own themselves so upon a fair and reasonable Conviction. † †

§. VIII. THIRDLY, As Meekness and a teachable Disposition is necessary to a right Faith, so it is also to Obedience. " For there are some Laws of the " Gospel which a proud and untractable Man, while he continues so, can never " approve of, or submit himself to, viz. those which concern forgiving Injuries, loving of Enemies, enduring Affronts patiently, and the like. From the " nature of these Rules it is evident, that Men must lay aside their Self-Will, " and take the Authority of God for a sufficient Obligation to do what he commands, or else they will at first be ready to object against them, if not to " cast them behind their Backs. As to those Rules in particular which restrain " from Revenge; how hard is it to perswade some Men that we are in good " earnest, when we tell them they cannot be saved upon other Terms than of " obeying them? As the World goes now (say they) these Rules are not reducible to Practice by a wise Man; there is no living amongst Men, if we " must be content to be called Cowards, and tamely expose our Honours, and " perhaps our Fortunes, by putting up an affront without a Challenge. And " thus

“ thus are the very best Rules of the Gospel served, which requiring the high-
 “ est Vertues, and consequently, most of all contradicting our inordinate Pas-
 “ sions, and worldly Interests, are therefore mutinyed against, and many In-
 “ conveniences laid to their Charge; that is, proud and foolish Man talks as
 “ if he were wiser than God, and knew better than Infinite Wisdom, what is
 “ fit to be made a Law to his Creatures: He therefore that intends to be a
 “ Christian indeed, must begin with this necessary Principle of Meekness and
 “ Humility; he must not pretend Difficulty and Inconvenience against any of
 “ the Laws of God, but must lay it down to himself as an unalterable Maxim,
 “ that he needs not any better Rule to govern his Conversation by, than the
 “ Will and Word of God. Without this Preparation he will soon be offend-
 “ ed. But that to which of all other things a meek and tractable Spirit is most
 “ necessary, is the due Application of the general Rules of the Gospel to our
 “ particular Actions; in doing whereof, there is great room for Deceit and In-
 “ sincerity, as will appear by the following Instances. We are commanded to
 “ distribute, and give Alms of such things as we have, and to do it freely and
 “ liberally, according to our Abilities: Now the Estimation of our Ability,
 “ and the rating our Alms in Proportion to it, is in a great Measure left
 “ to our own Prudence and Conscience. But where a Party is left to be
 “ Judge, he had need be very sincere and upright to deal impartially. In
 “ this Case, if a Man be selfish and froward, he will deal penuriously; as if
 “ it were enough to give away his Brass Money, while he hoards up his Silver
 “ and Gold; for which he has this Pretence, that the Proportion of his Alms
 “ is not determined to his Hand, but left to his own Discretion. Again;
 “ The Gospel forbids Idleness, Drunkenness, and corrupt Communication; but
 “ it is not said particularly how many Hours in a Day I am to spend in honest
 “ Labour, and in the exercise of Devotion; nor what Quantity of Wine this or
 “ that Person may lawfully drink; nor are those Limits exactly defined, where
 “ honest Mirth ends, and corrupt Communication begins. From hence
 “ therefore the Froward and Disingenuous may take Occasion to transgress
 “ the Bounds of his Duty, and plead for himself that you cannot punctually
 “ describe them out of the Bible. Farther, We are commanded *to do unto all*
 “ *Men as we would they should do unto us.* Now this is a plain Rule for our Deal-
 “ ings with other Men, and our applying it upon any particular Occasion con-
 “ sists, in supposing our selves to be in the Circumstances of those with whom
 “ we have any thing to do, and them to be in ours; and then in doing the
 “ same things to them, which we conclude it would be reasonable to expect
 “ from them. But now there is nothing but an ingenuous and tractable Dis-
 “ position that can secure a Man from being partial in determining what is
 “ reasonable, when another, not himself, is to have the Advantage of an equal
 “ determination; for if there be not that Sway against Selfishness, this will
 “ carry it to the Prejudice of his Neighbour. Hence it is that in matters of
 “ Kindness we are apt to do too little, and yet we say we should expect no
 “ more. In Matters of civil Respect we are apt to look for more than is
 “ due, and pretend that we should give as much if it were our own Case.”
 The same thing happens in many other Instances, which shows how “hard a
 “ thing it is for a selfish Man to put himself right into the Circumstances of a-
 “ nother, and to determine impartially what is fit to be done afterwards. Now
 “ if Self-Love is always so ready to turn the Scales, which should be equally
 “ poized, the one against the other, we had need be influenced by an ingenu-
 “ ous Purpose of doing our Duty, that by this means we may keep the Bal-
 “ lance even, when we are doing Right between our Neighbour and our
 “ selves.

§. IX. THUS much for the first of these Moral Endowments, *viz.* a meek
 and teachable Disposition; I proceed now to the Second and Last, *viz.* A just
 and serious Concern for everlasting Life; the Necessity whereof, upon all the
 fore-

foregoing Accounts, is so plain of it self, that little needs be said in order to make it plainer. “ Assuredly the worldly minded Man, who little values the
 “ Promise of eternal Life, will be as little concerned whether the Doctrines
 “ of Christianity be true or not; or rather he will be willing and desirous
 “ to find that they are false, which (as I have just now shown) is a great
 “ Impediment to believing. The End and Design of the Christian Religion
 is to teach Men how they may be happy in the Life to come: Now he that
 is under no Concern for the End, is not likely to trouble himself much about
 the Means; either he will turn his Back when the Gospel is offer’d to be made
 known to him, or if he be prevailed upon to take it into Consideration, he
 will not do it with that Diligence and Sincerity which is necessary to the be-
 getting in him a stedfast Faith, and to lead him to a thorough Knowledge and
 Understanding of his Duty. Again; as to Obedience, “ that one Command
 “ of *taking up the Cross* even to the losing of Life, if need be, plainly shews
 “ that a Man cannot be prepared for it, without making a future Reward his
 “ Aim and Hope. There are many Kinds of Sins ruinous to a Man’s good
 “ Estate in this Life, and several Duties of Religion which do evidently pro-
 “ mote our worldly Happiness, and others at least consistent with it.” And
 therefore Worldly Policy may carry a Man a great way in the external Com-
 pliance with the Rules of the Gospel. But besides that such a Compliance as
 this proceeds upon a wrong Bottom, and therefore cannot be called Obedience,
 it is plain that “ nothing less than the Hope of Heaven can carry him to all
 “ Obedience, even to *deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow Christ*, as
 “ he must do to be his Disciple. Here at last the Wisdom of this World will
 “ betray him, if he leans upon it, or rather if he be not supported by the
 “ Hope of that Reward in Heaven, which cannot be rivalled by Life it self.
 “ A Man therefore cannot be prepared for an universal Submission to the Will
 “ of God, without propounding to himself Everlasting Life as his End. He
 “ may *put his Hand to the Plough*, but he will *draw it back again*, because he
 “ *is not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven.*

* §. X. AND thus I have shewn you the Necessity of a meek and teachable *
 Disposition, together with a serious Concern for Eternal Life, in order to a
 right Faith, and also to Obedience. Where observe, that by Faith I mean a
 rational and well grounded Belief; † for “ I do not pretend that these Quali- †
 “ fications are necessary to a right Faith, in Opposition to downright Infidelity,
 “ mere Ignorance, or erroneous Opinion.” * This were to argue against com- *
 mon Experience, which shews, that many who are not thus qualified, do yet
 believe aright, which happens because Custom and Education in a right Faith
 frequently supersedes the Necessity of a rational Conviction, and by consequence
 of the Means preparatory thereunto. But when Men are actually in a State of
 Error or Infidelity, and must be called away from it by Reason and Persuasion,
 then it is that these Qualifications do become necessary, and unless they be thus
 prepared, the best Instructions will be lost upon them. The same thing must
 be said of those who have had the good Fortune to be trained up all along in
 the right Way, if they have a mind (as every one ought whom God has blessed
 with Abilities for it) to search into the Grounds of their Religion, that they
 may be able *to give an Account of the Hope that is in them.* In these Enquiries,
 I say, Men had need be influenced with a meek and disinterested Spirit, and
 have a single Eye at the Reward of Heaven; otherwise it will be an easy Mat-
 ter for them to *make Shipwreck of the Faith*, especially in this loose and dege-
 nerate Age, wherein the Devil’s War is carried on by such able and experienced
 Soldiers, and Religion is so fiercely attack’d on every side. There is scarce any
 Article of our Faith, which some will not dare to call in question, and that
 with so much Cunning, and such Shews of Plausibility, as will never fail to
 taint and corrupt the Minds of those who are not hearty to the Truth, *i. e.*
 whose

† whose Pride, Lusts, and Worldly-mindedness, have beforehand disposed them to receive an Infection. †

§. XI. “ WHICH of these two Dispositions, *viz.* Meekness, or Concern for the End, is either first, or has the greatest Force and Efficacy in leading us to Faith and Obedience, there is no occasion nicely to enquire. It may be observed from what has been said, that either makes way for the other to follow; and that where both are, the Presence of the one strengthens the other, from which it receives as much Assistance as it yields. A deep Sense and strong Desire of Eternal Happiness will cause Meekness of submitting to Instruction about the Means of obtaining it, rendring the Understanding teachable in the Truth of Christianity, and the Will tractable in the Obedience thereof. On the other hand, Meekness disposes to Attention, in comparing a future eternal Happiness with all present Interests, and by consequence to the making an impartial Judgment between them, in preferring the former unspeakably before the latter. Again, He that is awakened into a Sense of his Eternal State, will increase in Meekness: the more he is concerned for his own Salvation, the less will he be ashamed to own either his Ignorance or Mistakes, and the farther off from thinking much to submit to that Instruction and Reformation which is necessary to secure so great an Interest. On the other side, the meek Man, who is ready to embrace Truth, and disposed to obey, is in the way of gaining more distinct and lively Apprehensions of his Future State, his Judgment not being over-born with Prejudice and Passion.

P. 85.

§. XII. BUT to proceed. As these Dispositions are necessary to qualify us to believe and obey the Gospel of Christ, so also, Thirdly, they are sufficient.

* For a meek and teachable Man wants nothing more, than to have the Evidences for the Truth of the Christian Religion fairly and clearly proposed to him; when this is done, he will, nay he must believe, because those Evidences are sufficient to satisfy any reasonable and disinterested Man. Again, When a Man once believes, the same meek and teachable Spirit will, together with proper Helps, enable him to understand the Rules and Measures of his Duty, because such Rules are sufficiently full and perspicuous, to guide and direct those who are willing to learn. Lastly, When a Man not only believes in Christ, but understands the Laws of the Gospel, a just Concern for Everlasting Happiness will infallibly lead him to do that which by these Laws he finds himself obliged to. For this is a Condition, without which no Man can attain to Everlasting Life, which, since the Believer is now supposed to prefer incomparably before the Life that now is, the Performance of this Condition will be his principal Care. His present Interest will not prevail against the Sense of his Duty, but he will in all things conform himself to the Divine Will, *studying to approve himself in things that are excellent*, and going on every Day more and more towards Perfection. This is the natural, and (morally speaking) the necessary Effect of a meek and teachable Disposition, joined with a serious Concern for Eternal Life. † Accordingly we may observe, that “ this Disposition was all that our Saviour desired to find among Men, in order to the convincing them that he was the true Prophet. *If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of my self,* John 7. 17. *i. e.* if a Man be willing to do whatsoever shall appear to be the Will of God, and so is not prejudiced against the Truth by his Lusts, such a one will easily be convinced that my Doctrine is of God. We may observe farther, that the generality of the first Converts among the *Gentiles*, were of the *Gentile Worshipers*, or *Strangers Profelytes*, *i. e.* those *Gentiles*, who, together with the *Jews*, worshipped one God, and professed the Hope of a Life to come, such as *Cornelius* and his Friends. Whenever the Apostles had to do with these, they found them very tractable, and forward to believe. And

“ this

“ this Observation, I conceive, gives a clear Light to the Meaning of that mis-
 “ understood Text, *Acts 13. 48. And as many as were ordained to Eternal Life, be-*
 “ *lieved.* So we translate; but the Words ὅσοι τεταγμένοι ἦσαν might have as
 “ well been rendred, *As many as were set in order, or made ready,* and then the
 “ Context had plainly illustrated the Text. For in the same Verse we find that
 “ this was spoken of the *Gentiles, who were glad, and glorified God,* that the
 “ Word of *Salvation and Everlasting Life* belonged to them also (*v. 46, 47.*)
 “ But who these *Gentiles* were, we learn more particularly from Verse 43, *viz.*
 “ that they were some *σεβομένων προσκυλῶν,* of the *devout* or worshipping *Profelytes,*
 “ those who, as I said before, believed a Life to come, and sought for the
 “ Happiness thereof, and who therefore were in a fit Posture to lay hold of
 “ that great Promise of the Gospel, being both prepared to hear what the A-
 “ postles had to say concerning the Way and Means of obtaining it,” and also
 to make use of such Means, when once they were thoroughly instructed in
 them.

§. XIII. SEEING therefore that a meek and teachable Disposition, together
 with a serious Concern for Eternal Life, are both necessary and sufficient to
 bring us to Faith and Obedience, it follows from the Principles above laid
 down, that these two Dispositions, as they are contained under, so they do
 fully make up that honest and good Heart spoken of by our Saviour in the afore-
 mentioned Parable. “ And this, I think, may in a great measure be gathered
 “ from the Parable it self, where the unprepared Hearers are but of three sorts.
 “ The first are they *who hear the Word and understand it not* (*Matth. 13. 19.*) *i. e.*
 “ who want a meek and teachable Spirit, hearing indeed, but not bending their
 “ Minds to consider and learn. *Then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away*
 “ *that which was sown in their Hearts, i. e.* easily defaceth those superficial Impres-
 “ sions which the Truth made upon their Minds, and prevaileth with them
 “ to think of it no more, *lest they should believe and be saved* (*Luke 8. 12.*) The
 “ second sort are those, who having received the Word *with Joy, are offended*
 “ *when Tribulation or Persecution ariseth.* And the third those in whom *the Word*
 “ *is choaked with the Cares of this World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches.* Now
 “ the Unpreparedness of both these seems plainly to consist in this, *viz.*
 “ that they did not rightly value Eternal Life, the latter preferring the Riches
 “ and Pleasures of this World before it, the former not having deliberately
 “ resolved with themselves to abide the Tribulations and Adversities of this
 “ World rather than forego it, for which reason they are said *not to have Root*
 “ *in themselves, i. e.* to want that Firmness of Resolution which is necessary
 “ against a Time of Suffering. These are all the unprepared. Therefore they
 “ they are fully prepared (and by consequence have an honest and good Heart)
 “ who are meek and teachable, and undervalue the Life that now is in com-
 “ parison to that which is to come. For these, and these only, are they that
 “ will *understand the Word and keep it, and bring forth Fruit with Patience.*

Part. II.
P. 85, 86.

* §. XIV. FROM the whole therefore you may now understand what is the
 true Work of the Spirit in bringing us to Faith and Obedience, *viz.* the cool-
 ing our Lusts and carnal Appetites, and thereby disposing or putting us into a
 fit Temper seriously and impartially to weigh and examine the Evidence upon
 which Christianity is built, and the several Motives by which the Practice of
 it is enforced upon us. By what secret Power the Spirit does thus dispose and
 prepare our Minds, God has no where been pleased to reveal, nor do I think
 it possible for our finite Understandings to comprehend. But that the Spirit
 does this we are certain, tho' we know not the Manner how. And because
 this is all that is needful for him to do, we have no Ground, either from the
 reason of the thing, or from the general Promises of God, to believe that he
 does any thing more. I do not say absolutely that the Spirit does no more;
 because the Spirit, out of his abundant Goodness, may, if he pleases, give us

*

more Assistance than what is barely sufficient for us. But then, though the Spirit may do this, yet we cannot thence positively conclude that he does; and therefore those who pretend that the Spirit does more than that which I have already supposed him to do, must prove their Opinions by some clear and convincing Arguments, before they can in reason expect that we should believe them. What these Opinions are, and how they are maintained, it shall be
 † my next Business to enquire. †

CHAP. IV.

Of the pretended Operations of the Spirit; and first, that such Operations are not necessary.

§. I. **F**IRST therefore, it is pretended that the Spirit doth now reveal to us the Doctrines of the Gospel, as they were revealed at first to the
 * inspired Writers, *i. e.* immediately. * Secondly, It is pretended that the Spirit gives us an Assurance that the Scriptures are the Word of God, by an immediate Testimony of their Divine Authority. † Thirdly, It is pretended that the Spirit teaches Men the true Sense and Meaning of the Scriptures by immediate Inspiration. * Fourthly, It is pretended that the Spirit does also by immediate Inspiration call Men to the Work of the Ministry. † Fifthly, It is pretended that the Spirit suggests Words and Matter to Men when they pray. Lastly, It is likewise pretended that the Spirit gives Men an absolute Assurance
 * of their Eternal Salvation. * These are those Gifts or Operations of the Spirit which (I think) are falsely pretended to in these Days; and to make it appear that they are falsely pretended to, I shall distinctly shew, 1. That none of them
 † are necessary. 2. That none of them are promised in the holy Scriptures. †

P. 162. §. II. **A**ND first, It is not necessary that the Spirit should immediately reveal to us the Doctrines of the Gospel. * For if it be necessary, it must be so either to every Man, or to a few only. That it is not necessary to every Man that the Doctrines of the Gospel be immediately revealed to him, is evident,
 † † because these Doctrines are all of them to be learned from the holy Scriptures. * If any one affirms the contrary, I will desire him to name me some
 * Doctrine or other, which is not to be met with in the Scriptures, and then ask him how he proves it to be a Doctrine of Jesus Christ. From the Scriptures he cannot, because it is already supposed not to be contained in the Scriptures. Nor can he prove it by immediate Revelation, because this is to beg the thing in question. This Inconveniency must every one necessarily labour under, who shall take upon him to deny that the Scriptures are a compleat Rule, and fly to immediate Revelation to supply any supposed Deficiency in them. He will for ever find himself unable to prove what he says, unless he can shew by Miracles that he is divinely inspired: Wherefore seeing this is what no Man in these Days either does, or can pretend to, I shall conclude that the Scriptures are a compleat Rule, *i. e.* that they do contain in them every thing that is necessary either to be believed or practised in order to Salvation. But I need not labour to convince Men of that which they are beforehand willing to grant themselves. And this is the Case of our Pretenders to immediate Revelation with respect to the Sufficiency of the Sacred Writings. They tell us plainly that (g) *the Scriptures contain a full and ample Account of all the chief Principles of the Doctrine of Christ.* That they are a (h) *clear and perfect*

(g) Barclay Apol. Prop. 2.

(h) Id. Quak. confirm'd Op. p. 603.

Copy as to all Essentials and Necessaries of the Christian Religion. And therefore they say that (i) *they do not plead for a Revelation of a new Gospel, but a new Revelation of the good old Gospel and Doctrines.* But that there should be a Necessity of a new Revelation of the old Gospel and Doctrines, *i. e.* that it should be necessary that the Spirit should immediately reveal to every Man those Doctrines which are already revealed in the Scriptures, is so gross an Affront to the common Sense of Mankind, that nothing needs be said to confute the Assertion.

§. III. AND as an immediate Revelation of the Doctrines of the Gospel is not necessary to every Man, so neither is it necessary to any particular Persons. For I demand, to what Persons can it be necessary? Why (k) *Barclay* tells us that it is necessary, 1. *To the Illiterate*, many whereof *cannot read one Letter in their own Mothers Tongue*, and by consequence *cannot have an immediate Knowledge* of their Duties. That is to say, because the Illiterate cannot learn the Doctrines of the Gospel without an Instructor, therefore it is necessary that they should be revealed to them immediately. Whereas on the contrary, he ought to have concluded, that because the Illiterate may, by the help of an Instructor, understand the Doctrines of the Gospel from the Scriptures, therefore it is not necessary that they should be immediately revealed to them. But at this rate, says he, *their Faith must depend upon the Credit of other Mens reading or relating them to them.* Very true; and where, I pray, is the Harm of this? if the Instruction of others more knowing than themselves be ordinarily a safe Way of bringing Men to Salvation. Now that it is ordinarily a safe Way is evident, and cannot be denied, without charging the all-wise God with Folly. For this is the Way which he has been pleased to appoint in his Church, wherein he has established an Order of Men, whose peculiar Office it is *to feed the Flock of Christ*, and by *sound Doctrine to instruct the Ignorant*, as well as to *convince Gain-sayers*. Nor does it avail what *Barclay* alledges, *viz.* that by this means Men *may continue in Iniquity ignorantly, and believe a Lie confidently.* For God has nowhere promised, nor is he bound absolutely to secure Men from Error; but he has it always in his Power to consider the Causes of Error, and will certainly make all just and reasonable Allowances, when it has arisen not from any Fault properly our own. But he urges farther, that there *are many* likewise, who though they can read the Scriptures in their own Language, *have not yet a thorough Knowledge of the Original Languages*, and who therefore *must depend upon the Honesty and Faithfulness of Interpreters*, which is very true again. And, I think, a Man may in the main as safely rely upon Interpreters as he may upon his own Eyes, unless he can be so mad as to suppose, either that No-body now understands the Original Languages, or that those who do, are such Juglers as to combine together to cheat all Mankind but themselves. No, says he, *the many Corrections and Amendments which have been made in our Translations do sufficiently declare how uncertain a thing it is to build our Faith upon them.* But he should have declared where our Translations are defective in any one essential Point, *i. e.* he should have shewn that our Translations are not exact enough for a Man to know all that it is necessary for him to know, and then he had done something. But since this neither is, nor can be pretended, all that he has said, or that can be said upon this Head, will be nothing to the Purpose. 2. Another sort of Persons, to whom, as he pretends, an immediate Revelation is necessary, are *deaf Persons*, *i. e.* I suppose, those who have always been absolutely incapable of hearing, and consequently of receiving any outward Instruction. But why must these needs have an immediate Revelation? Why, because else they will be *without any Rule to God-ward*, *i. e.* without any Law to govern their Actions by, and so *all damned*. But if they have no Law, they cannot be damned, for

(i) *Id.* Apol. Prop. 3. §. 4.(k) *Ibid.*

where there is no Law there is no Transgression. I say farther, that they have a Law, for they have the Law of Reason, and so far as they are enlightened by that, so far they are accountable, and no farther. 3. There are besides these another sort of Folks, to whom an immediate Revelation is also said to be necessary. And who are they? You will hardly think of them without telling, and therefore if you would know, they are, forsooth — *Children* and *Ideots*! This is too serious a Subject to be pleasant withal, or else there would be room enough for Divertisement. The Man expected, I suppose, that a Babe of a Year Old should be able to hold Forth, and a Natural to determine Cases of Conscience! If he had ever seen or heard of any such forward Sucklings, or such wise Fools, he would have done well to have given us a Sample. — But he knew, unless he himself were either Child or Ideot, that such Persons are not capable of being benefited by any Revelation at all, and consequently that an immediate Revelation cannot be necessary for them.

§. IV. I have but just touch'd upon these Matters, which indeed are not worth the mentioning, but only as they may serve to shew how far either an evil Mind will lead Men to sport themselves with the Weakness of Mankind, or *Enthusiasm* drive them beyond their Senses. Wherefore I proceed now to shew, Secondly, That it is not necessary that the Spirit should give us an Assurance that the Scriptures are the Word of God by any immediate Testimony of their Divine Authority, that is to say (for this is what those who maintain this Opinion mean) by any Act or Operation distinct from and superior to that by which the Spirit prepares our Minds to consider and judge impartially of the Evidence of those rational Arguments, by which the Scriptures are proved to have been written by Persons divinely inspired. What Sort or Kind of Operation this is, those who contend for it are not agreed among themselves. But either it must be a proper immediate Revelation, or it must not. The former is what the Quakers maintain; the latter seems to be the Opinion of the foreign Reformed Divines, who do not, if I apprehend them rightly, imagine that the Spirit causes us to believe the Scriptures to be from God, by any immediate Evidence or Proof that it gives of their Divine Authority (and consequently not by any proper Revelation) but that it does (1) *by a secret and imperceptible Impulse impress*, and as it were *stamp an Assurance upon our Minds*. There will be no occasion to dispute nicely upon this Point; thus much is manifest, that this Operation of the Spirit, which they call the *secret Testimony* of the Spirit, is an Operation (m) clearly distinct from that, by which our understandings are enlightened to judge of that external Evidence which the Scriptures carry along with them of their Divine Authority. Now whether this Operation be supposed to be a proper Revelation, or any thing else, I say it is not necessary, because that external Evidence is alone sufficient to convince any reasonable and unprejudiced Man. I know of none that deny this, except the Quakers, whose Cavils if any one has a mind to enquire into, he may find them in *Barclay's* Apology, and if he thinks them to be of any Weight, may

(1) Nemo Theologorum quod sciam, per Testimonium (Sp. Sancti) intelligit expressam aliquam Dei vocem quam Fidelis intus audiat, & sentiat, & cujus Autoritate & velut indicio, propositam extrinsecus Revelationem (Sc. Scripturam) amplectatur. Sed per hoc in genere non aliud intelligunt quam Operationem quandam Sp. Sancti, qua Fidem nobis ingenerat, & quæ se ad Fidem non habet instar Medii sive Argumenti quo Fides innitatur, sed potius instar causæ efficientis. Theses Sedan. de certitud. quæ Fid. compet. Thes. 26. Again, Quum Spiritus Sanctus dicitur in Fidelium Cordibus de divina Scripturæ veritate Testari — istud accipiendum est, de virtuali quodam Testimonio; nec per hoc datur aliud intelligi quam quod arcano modo Sp. Sanctus nos ad credendum instigat, & certam de Scripturæ Divinitate persuasionem mentibus nostris imprimit. De Auct. Scrip. Par. 2. Thes. 9.

(m) Ut aliquis Libros illos (Scripturas) recipiat pro divinis, non satis est cernere eam Lucem quæ in illis est, quandoquidem Lux illa tanta non est, ut possit eum Assensum extorquere quem requirit Fides — Ergo — præter actionem illam Sp. Sancti aperientis mentis nostræ Oculos ad lucem in sacra Scriptura fulgentem, necessarius videtur internus quidam, ut sic dicam, Impulsus & Instinctus, qui nos ad credendum moveat vi quadam quæ sit omni argumento & Ratione major. Et Instinctus ille est quem proprie per suasionem Spiritus intelligi debere putamus. Id. Ibid. Thes. 8. 9.

for an Answer have recourse to those learned Writers, who have undertaken to defend the Scriptures against those whose Trumpery this Author has only raked together, I mean Atheists and Libertines. But as to the other, they lay us under no Necessity of making any such Appeal, for they own that we have Arguments sufficient to convince any sober and rational Enquirer, that the Prophets and Apostles wrote by Divine Inspiration, and that we have their genuine Writings now in our Hands. Now since this is the Case, I would fain be informed wherein lies the Necessity of this secret Testimony of the Spirit, which they so earnestly contend for. Surely if the Scriptures may be proved to be the Word of God by convincing Arguments, nothing more can be necessary for the Spirit to do in order to our being convinced, than that he enables us by a meek and teachable Disposition to consider and judge of these Arguments impartially. For Unbelief or Doubtfulness in any Case must arise from one or other of these two Causes, *viz.* either because the thing to be believed has not sufficient Evidence on its side, or else because though it has, the Mind is hindered from discovering this Evidence, by Ignorance, Carelessness, Perverseness, or some other Impediment. Wherefore seeing it is supposed in the present Case, that there is sufficient Evidence on the one hand, and no Obstruction to prevent the discovering this Evidence on the other, 'tis plain that in this Case a Man must necessarily be convinced, because otherwise there will be an Effect without a Cause, which is most absurd.

§. V. BUT 'tis objected, that tho' a Man may, and will in some degree, be convinced that the Scriptures are the Word of God, by rational Arguments, yet he cannot have that *full Persuasion* or *Assurance* of it *which the Nature of Faith requires*. For these Arguments, say (*n*) they, affording only a *moral Evidence*, cannot produce an *absolute Assurance*, as *Demonstrations* do. But such, in their Opinion, ought that Assurance to be, wherewith we receive the Scriptures as the Word of God. Now in answer to this, I say, 1. That if that Assurance, which admits of no Doubt be an absolute Assurance, then we may be absolutely assured that the Scriptures are the Word of God, by rational Arguments, as is evident, and they themselves do (*o*) allow. 2. If that Assurance which admits of no doubt be not an absolute Assurance, then it is not true, at least it cannot be proved, that the Nature of Faith requires such an Assurance. For by this they must mean, or they mean nothing, that it is in the nature of the thing reasonable and fitting that we be absolutely assured that the Scriptures are the Word of God. But it cannot be reasonable and fitting in the nature of the thing, that I should be absolutely assured that the Scriptures are the Word of God, unless there be somewhere or other a sufficient Foundation for such an Assurance. I ask then, Is there a sufficient Foundation for such an Assurance, or is there not? If there be, what is it? To place this Assurance upon rational Arguments is to deny the Hypothesis, for it is now Supposed that rational Arguments are not a sufficient Foundation for an Absolute Assurance. To place it upon the secret Testimony of the Spirit, is plainly to beg the Thing in Question. I must add farther, that granting there were such a Thing as the secret Testimony of the Spirit, yet would it not make an Absolute Assurance fitting and reasonable, unless you Suppose thereby that the Spirit gives us some Evidence or Proof that the Scriptures are the Word of God; for an Assurance

(*n*) Consentiant Scholæ Christianæ, Certitudinem Fidei summam esse; & talem quæ vel æquet vel etiam superet Certitudinem omnem quæ reperitur in Scientiis humanis — Sed Fides qua verbum Dei quod hodie in sacra Scriptura continetur suscipimus, non potest habere illam certitudinem, si nitatur tantum Notis & Argumentis quibus Scriptura divina comprobatur. Nec enim sunt Demonstrationes quæ certitudinem absolutam generant, sed argumenta solum moralia, quæ licet sufficiant ut aliquis ad prudenter credendum inducatur; non tamen per se & ex sua natura possunt gignere certitudinem parem illi quam habent Disciplinæ Mathematicæ. Id, *Ibid.* Thes. 31.

(*o*) Judicium illud quo mens nostra statuit verbum (Sc. Scripturam) Divinum esse — fundatur in argumentis quæ — possunt ac debent ex mente bene affecta tollere omnem Dubitationem, eamque certam & securam reddere. Id, *de Certitud. quæ Fid. compet.* Thes. 37.

founded upon no Evidence, is not a reasonable Assurance, but a groundless, and consequently unreasonable Persuasion. This Observation is alone sufficient to overthrow the Notion of these Divines. For the Meaning of it in plain English is this, that the Spirit gives us greater Assurance that the Scriptures are the Word of God, than there is any Ground or Reason for, *i. e.* that the Spirit turns us as it were into Machines, and leads us on blindly we know not why! This is Absurdity enough of all Conscience: but it is still more absurd to make this Assurance, which the Spirit is supposed to give, an essential Property of Faith; for this is in effect to say, that it is in the nature of the thing fitting and reasonable that we be more fully persuaded of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, than it is in the nature of the thing fitting and reasonable that we should be, which is a most gross and palpable Contradiction. I conclude then, that unless it can be demonstrated *a priori*, that the Spirit gives us some inward Evidence, *i. e.* does inwardly reveal it to us, that the Scriptures are the Word of God, that the Assurance which may be gain'd by rational Arguments, call it an absolute Assurance, or what you please, is all the Assurance, that the Nature of Faith requires. And this I so much the rather assert, because such an Assurance is abundantly sufficient to answer the great End and Purpose of believing, *i. e.* to lead us to Obedience. For I have before shewn, that the Assurance which may be gained by rational Arguments, is such an Assurance as admits of no Doubt or Scruple: now it is a Reason sufficient why a Man should obey the Gospel, † that he be fully and beyond all Doubt assured that the Scriptures are true. †

§. VI. THIRDLY, It is not necessary that the Spirit should teach us the true Sense and Meaning of the Scriptures by immediate Inspiration. My Reason is, because all such Doctrines as are necessary either to be believed or practised in order to Salvation, are plainly delivered in the holy Scriptures, *i. e.* they are delivered in such a manner as that they may clearly be discovered by the Use of our natural Faculties. * If any one should deny this, he would labour under the same Inconveniency with those who shall deny that all necessary Doctrines are contained in the Scriptures at all, *i. e.* he would never be able to prove what he affirms. For if any Doctrine should be alledged which is not clearly to be proved from Scripture, it cannot be shewn that such a Doctrine is necessary, without having recourse to immediate Inspiration, which is the thing in question. But of this, I think, there is no Dispute. For I do not find that the warmest Advocates for immediate Inspiration pretend, that an immediate Inspiration is necessary that we may simply, *i. e.* literally or speculatively understand the Doctrines of the Gospel from the Scriptures; all that they contend for is, that without an immediate Inspiration we cannot understand them spiritually and savingly. (p) We distinguish, says Barclay, between the spiritual and the literal, the saving Heart Knowledge, and the soaring, airy, Head Knowledge. The last, we confess, may be divers ways obtained; but the first no other way than by the inward, immediate Manifestation and Revelation of God's Spirit. But what do these Men mean by understanding the Doctrines of the Gospel spiritually? Do they mean understanding them as they are in themselves, *i. e.* in the same Sense wherein the holy Pen-men wrote them? Or do they mean, understanding them to any good spiritual End or Purpose? These two are the only sound Senses that can be put upon this Word; and let them chuse which they please. If the former, then he who understands the Doctrines of the Gospel literally or speculatively, must understand them spiritually; for he who does not understand the Doctrines of the Gospel as they are in themselves, does not understand them at all, which every one who understands them lite-

(p) Apol. Prop. 2. § 1.

rally or speculatively, is supposed to do. By consequence in this Sense an immediate Inspiration cannot be necessary to enable us to understand the Doctrines of the Gospel spiritually, for they themselves grant that a Man may literally or speculatively understand the Doctrines of the Gospel without an immediate Inspiration. If they chuse the latter Sense, then he who understands the Doctrines of the Gospel savingly, must also understand them spiritually; for he does not understand the Doctrines of the Gospel savingly, who does not understand them to any good spiritual End or Purpose, *i. e.* who does not apply them to the Good and Benefit of his Soul. We have now therefore only to enquire, whether a Man who understands the Doctrines of the Gospel literally and speculatively, may not understand them savingly without an immediate Inspiration; and that he may is evident. For, as I shall shew in (q) another place, that which makes Knowledge to be saving, is its being accompanied with a sincere Obedience to the Commandments of Christ. Now 'tis notorious that the Laws, the Promises, and the Threatnings of the Gospel are the very same, whether we discern them by immediate Inspiration, or by the Use of our natural Faculties, and by consequence are as well fitted or disposed to lead us to Obedience the one way as the other.

§. VII. I KNOW not of any thing else that can be alledged for the Necessity of an immediate Inspiration to give us the true Sense and Meaning of the Scriptures, unless it be the Determination of religious Controversies. If this therefore should be pretended, I answer, that these Controversies must be either about Things necessary or Things not necessary. If the latter, I say then that such Controversies are not necessary to be determined, and consequently an immediate Inspiration cannot be necessary for the Determination of them. If the former, I say then that such Controversies may be determined without an immediate Inspiration; for I have shewn that all Things necessary are plainly and clearly revealed to us in the Scriptures; and therefore Men need only to examine the Scriptures soberly, and impartially to come to an Agreement in such Matters as these. If it be said, that for all this Men will still be contending; I answer, that it is neither necessary nor reasonable that God should administer a Remedy to the Obstinacy and Perverseness of Mankind. If he has afforded them means sufficient to inform themselves in their Duty, it is enough; and if they will not make use of these, it is not to be expected that he should give them more. † Besides, I do not see but this End will be much better answered, if God blesses the Industry of Men in reading, hearing, conferring with others, meditating, and comparing Place with Place, than if he gives them the Understanding of the Scriptures by immediate Inspiration; "because the Knowledge which" "is gained the former way, may be much more easily imparted to another," "than that which might be obtained by the latter. For I can lead another" "into my Knowledge of the Scriptures, by shewing him the Reason that convinced me, and the Method of my coming to it. But I cannot go about" "to convince another of that Truth, which I know only by immediate Inspiration, unless I could also work Miracles;" * because I should have no way to convince him that my Pretensions to Inspiration are true. And indeed suppose that I could work Miracles, though in that Case he ought in all Reason to be convinced, yet does it not follow that he certainly would be so. For our Saviour and his Apostles wrought Miracles to confirm their Doctrines, and yet those who saw those Miracles, were not all of them thereby convinced that they were Persons sent from God. But what if immediate Inspiration be a Privilege common to all? What? Why the Case will be the very same, and our Pretenders may, if they please, satisfy themselves herein by their own Experience. They tell us that they have the Spirit, by which they are immediate-

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(q) See the Discourse of Saving Faith.

ly taught the Sense of the Scriptures; they say likewise, that all Christians may, if they please, be thus immediately instructed as well as themselves. Be it so; yet there are Disputes; yet we contend with them, even about necessary Matters. How happens this? Why, it seems we are obstinate, and do resist the Motions of the Spirit, which strives with us to lead us to the true Spiritual Knowledge. Here then is again plain Matter of Fact for them, that if Men be perverse and obstinate, immediate Inspiration it self will not put an End to religious Controversies; and I will venture to say, that if they be not, such Controversies may, at least in all necessary Matters, be effectually determined without it.

§. VIII. FOURTHLY, It is not necessary that the Spirit should call Men to the Work of the Ministry by immediate Inspiration. For this is sufficiently provided for, if there be any Persons now upon Earth who have received Power or Authority from Christ to send forth Ministers by an outward Ordination. I ask then, are there such Persons, or are there not? If there be, then I say an immediate Call from the Spirit cannot be necessary: For he is as much called to the Ministry, who is called thereto by any Person who acts by a delegated Power from Christ, as he who is called immediately by the Spirit. By Consequence, seeing it is sufficient to make a Man a Minister of Christ, that he be once called, if he be called the former way, there can be no Necessity of his being called the latter. If it be denied that there are any such Persons as these, then indeed a plain way will be laid to bring in the Necessity of an immediate Call from the Spirit. But I say that there must be such Persons; because if there be no such Persons, an immediate Call, as the Case now stands, will not be sufficient. Sufficient, I say, not with respect to the Person so called, but with respect to those to whom he is sent, and over whom he is to exercise a spiritual Jurisdiction: For no Man can claim a spiritual Jurisdiction over me, nor ought I to own him as a Minister of Christ, unless he can prove that he is called of God. But how should any one in these times prove that he is called of God, who has only an immediate Call from the Spirit? By Miracles? Let him pretend to such a Power if he dares. By the Soundness of his Doctrine? No; For every one that preaches sound and wholesom Doctrine, is not therefore a Minister of Christ. I see not then what such a one as this can have to say for himself, unless it be barely that he is called by the Spirit; which every Pretender will be sure to assert as confidently, and may do it with as good a Grace as he. Hence therefore I thus argue; if Christ has not vested any Persons with a Power or Authority to send forth Ministers, it will be impossible, as the Case now stands, for the People to know who are true Ministers of Christ, and who not. But the Scripture supposes, and Reason requires, that Men may know who are true Ministers of Christ; therefore Christ has vested some Persons with a Power to send forth Ministers. Therefore an immediate Call from the Spirit cannot be necessary. Who those Persons are who are empowered by Christ to send forth Ministers, it is none of my Business now to enquire. It is sufficient for my Purpose to have shewn, that some such Persons there must of Necessity be. And if we will consult the Scriptures, we shall find that this Method of sending forth Ministers by outward Ordination was in Fact appointed by Christ, and practised in the first Ages of the Gospel. Christ himself sent forth his Apostles to Preach; these were empowered to, and accordingly did, appoint others to the Ministry; and we read of some who were appointed by the Apostles, that had likewise a Power given them of appointing others. Thus was the Ministerial Function convey'd, in those Days, successively from the one to the other; thus it has been conveyed ever since; and thus it will be conveyed hereafter, even unto the End of the World. I would not however be understood as if I denied a Call from the Spirit to be in any Sense necessary to those who shall be appointed to the Work of the Ministry. For certain it is, that no one ought to take this

this Office upon himself, unless he be first of all possessed of a due Sense of the Dignity and Importance of it, of a sincere Desire, and firm Resolutions of advancing the Glory of God therein to the utmost of his Power. Now these good Dispositions of Mind being all of them Effects of the Divine Grace, a Man who is endued with them may well enough be said to be called of the Spirit; and such a Call as this our Church expects and requires to find in every one who comes to be ordained. But this is not the Call which these Men contend for. For the Call which they contend for, is such a Call as carries with it a special Designation of the Person to the Office of a Minister, and by consequence actually invests him with the Ministerial Authority. Whereas the Call which I have now mentioned invests no Man with the Ministerial Power, but only disposes or qualifies him to receive that Power from the Hands of those who have received a Commission from Christ to confer it upon him. †

§. IX. FIFTHLY, It is not necessary that the Spirit should suggest either Words or Matter to us when we pray. For we may pray by a Form, and then 'tis notorious that there can be no Necessity for the Spirit to suggest either Words or Matter to us, because they are both of them already prepared to our Hands. If it be said, that in order to make our Prayers acceptable, it be necessary that we pray *extempore*, and not by a Form, I answer, that this is a vain and foolish Pretension. For if extemporary Prayers were necessary to the obtaining of our Requests, "then certainly we should have been admonished in Scripture to pray *extempore*, as well as to pray at all, and to beware of Book-Prayers, and the Use of Forms, as much as of neglecting this Duty altogether, or performing it in a careless and slothful manner. But so far are we from finding any Command in Scripture to pray upon sudden Invention, that we find no Preference given to this Way above the other, but rather the contrary; for when our Saviour taught his Disciples to pray, he enjoined them the Use of a Form, as you may see, *Luke 11. 2.*" But admitting, for Argument sake, that in order to make our Prayers acceptable, it is necessary that they be conceived *extempore*, "I say then that the Suggestions of the Spirit are not necessary to the Conception or Utterance of such Prayers. For, 1. They are not necessary to teach us what Things we are to pray for, because the holy Scriptures will abundantly supply us with the Knowledge of them. Nor, 2. are they necessary to dictate to us the Words in which we are to pray, because a ready Use of our Mother Tongue will serve us with them freely enough. In short, a competent understanding of the chief Heads of Religion, and the retaining in Memory a certain Number of Scripture Phrases and Passages of holy Writ proper to be converted into Petitions, together with a tolerable readiness of uttering ones Thoughts, will, in a great measure, furnish a Man with this Gift of praying *extempore*; and being thus qualified, he shall not need to have either the Matter or the Words of his Prayers dictated to him by the Spirit, any more than of an ordinary Discourse with his Neighbour upon a Subject which he is used to speak of. But if he hath over and above a warm Invention, a voluble Tongue, and a good Share of Assurance in himself, especially if he be apt to be heated with his own Thoughts and Expressions, he is then qualified to excel that Way, and to pass for one that hath a double Measure of the Spirit. I speak not this to undervalue any Man's Abilities in this Kind, but only to shew that they may be set a great deal too high;" * and this those Men manifestly do, who ascribe all Heat and Eloquence in Praying to a Divine Principle. For why may not a Man in this Case express himself, readily and fluently, by the help of his natural Faculties, as well as he does in a hundred others, where no one in his right Senses will affirm, that either the Words or Matter of his Discourses are suggested to him immediately by the Spirit of God? †

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§. X. LASTLY, It is not necessary that the Spirit should give Men an absolute Assurance of their Eternal Salvation, and that for this plain Reason, *viz.* because such an Assurance is in no wise necessary to be had. For if it be necessary, it must be necessary either as a Condition of Salvation, or as a Motive to our Duty, or as a means of Comfort in the Performance of it. Now, 1. "It is not necessary as a Condition of Salvation, because no such Condition is required; on the contrary, we are exhorted to *work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, and how that and the like Exhortations can consist with supposing this Assurance to be a Condition of being saved, I must confess I do not very well understand. Besides, the Friends of the contrary Persuasion do not, so far as I can discern, pretend to this Assurance by the Spirit any otherwise, than by having also the Evidences of their being in a regenerate State cleared up to their Understandings. Now he who is in a regenerate State, is in a State of Salvation; by consequence, according to this Hypothesis, a Man must be actually in a State of Salvation before he can be assured that he shall be saved. But if this Assurance be a necessary Condition of being saved, then till we are thus assured, we cannot be in a State of Salvation. So that if ever we be saved upon these Terms, we must either be assured before we are assured, or in a State of Salvation before we are in a State of Salvation, than which nothing can be more absurd. 2. This Assurance is not necessary, as a Motive to our Duty." For it is a sufficient Motive to encourage us to well-doing, if we have a Conditional Assurance of Salvation, *i. e.* if we be sure that we shall be saved if we will keep God's Commandments. I will add farther, that an absolute Assurance that we shall be saved, would rather make us negligent in the Performance of our Duty, because it would take off the Force of one very considerable Motive, which is frequently made use of in the Scripture, to persuade us to Diligence and Watchfulness, I mean the Motive of Fear. In short, all the Promises of Eternal Life contained in the Gospel are only Conditional, and by consequence all the Assurance we can have from thence is but Conditional; so that it must be said, that the Scriptures do not contain sufficient Inducements to Obedience, if a Conditional Assurance be not such. 3. "This Assurance is not necessary as a means of Comfort in the Performance of our Duty. For the Conditional Promises of the Gospel are a sufficient Ground of Comfort, while we are careful to keep the Commandments of God; and if we are not, Comfort is a thing which belongs not to us. The Gospel will afford us no other Comfort than that which arises from the Performance of our Duty; and seeing it has given us abundant Encouragement to be diligent in our Duty, by the Promises of God's Grace, it hath therefore abundantly provided for our Comfort. But 'tis a most unreasonable thing to pretend that we cannot serve God with any Comfort, till we are assured that it is absolutely impossible for us to miscarry. For this is a Comfort proper only for those who have finished their Course, and are ready to receive the Crown of Righteousness.

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§. XI. THUS far then we have gone in confuting Mens Pretensions to the above mentioned Operations of the Holy Spirit, *viz.* so far as to shew that such Operations are not necessary. If any one should say, that though they may not be absolutely necessary, yet they are profitable, I answer that supposing them to be so, the bare Profitableness of any Gift will not prove it to be a common Gift, because, as I have before observed, the Goodness of God does by no means oblige him to, nor do his general Promises imply that he will, give us every profitable thing. * Wherefore seeing these Operations are already shewn not to be necessary, before it can be concluded that God does actually vouchsafe them, it must be shewn that he has somewhere or other in Scripture particularly promised them; which whether it can be done or not, I shall now enquire, by examining those Texts which are alledged for that Purpose. †

CHAP. V.

That these Operations are none of them promised in the holy Scriptures.

* §. I. **T**HE Texts alledged for the three first sorts of immediate Inspiration, are many in Number; I shall select only a few of the most considerable, and they are these that follow, viz. 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. *John*. 14. 26. *Joh*. 16. 13. 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11, 12. 1 *Joh*. 2. 20, 27. *Joel* 2. 28. *Rom*. 8. 14. *Joh*. 14. 16, 17. *Joh*. 6. 45. 1 Cor. 3. 16. These are the chief of those Passages which are brought to prove that the Spirit reveals to us the Doctrines of the Gospel immediately, gives us an Assurance that the Scriptures are the Word of God, and immediately instructs us in the true Sense and Meaning thereof. I have put them together, because they are most of them promiscuously alledged for all these Purposes; but I think their Pretensions from them will every way be sufficiently confuted, if it can be shewn, as I shall now endeavour to shew, that these Texts are all of them either 1. such as do not speak of the Operations of the Spirit at all, or 2. such as though they do speak of the Operations of the Spirit, do not concern all Christians in general, or 3. such as though they do concern all Christians, yet speak only of the Operations of the Spirit in general, and by consequence cannot be sufficient Proofs for any particular Sort or Kind of Operation whatsoever. †

§. II. FIRST therefore; there is one, and that one of the most considerable of these Texts, which does not speak of the Operations of the Spirit at all, and that is, 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. *The natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are Foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no Man.* The Force of our Adversaries Reasonings from these Words stands chiefly upon the Sense of those Phrases, *the natural Man* — *he that is spiritual* — *receiveth not the things of the Spirit*, which they interpret variously, according to the different Notions they have of the Spirit's Operations. There will be no need to examine these Interpretations distinctly and particularly, seeing it will be a sufficient Confutation of them all, if it can be shewn that the Operations of the Spirit are not here spoken of; and this, I think, will appear very plainly, if we consider the Connexion of this Place with the Apostles Discourse in this and the foregoing Chapter.

“ To allay those Contentions that were amongst the *Corinthians* about their Teachers (*Chap*. 1. *Verse* 11.) St. Paul reminds them how he had preached the Gospel to them, which, says he, was *not with Wisdom of Words, i. e.* not with Rhetorical Orations or Philosophical Discourses, such as those who were accounted wise amongst the *Gentiles* made use of to gain Men to their Opinions, (but as he tells them, *Chap*. 2. *Verse* 4.) *in Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power, i. e.* by apparent Miracles wrought in Confirmation of his Doctrines. Hereupon the Apostle takes occasion to shew the Offence which they who were most in vogue for Wisdom, took at the Gospel upon this Account. *The preaching of the Cross is to them that perish Foolishness* (*ver*. 18.) And who these were we learn from *ver*. 23. *We preach Christ crucified; unto the Jews a stumbling Block, and to the Greeks Foolishness.* The particular Reason of this Disgust is also noted by the Apostle, *ver*. 22. *The Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom.* Here are therefore two sorts of Men, concerning whom the Apostle speaks, and shews concerning each of them why they rejected the Gospel of Christ. 1. The *Jews*, whose Pretence was that they wanted a Sign, *i. e.* some Prodigy from Heaven, or

“ some such amazing Appearances as accompanied the Delivery of the Law to
 “ *Moses* upon Mount *Sinai*. 2. The *Greek Philosophers*, who were offended at the
 “ Simplicity of the Apostles Preaching, who nakedly represented their Doctrines,
 “ without such Philosophical Subtilties as they used themselves. For that which
 “ they sought after was *Wisdom*, or Demonstration from natural Principles; and
 “ therefore ’tis of these peculiarly said that the Gospel was *Foolishness unto them*, *i. e.*
 “ they esteemed it to be foolish, because they looked for Discourses merely Phi-
 “ losophical. The Apostle having nevertheless shewn the Excellency of the Gospel
 above the Wisdom of this World, and the great Prevalency that his Way of
 Preaching had over the most sober and disinterested Part of Mankind; having
 also observed how agreeable it was to the infinite Wisdom of God to confound
 the Wisdom of the World, in bringing Men to Salvation by Methods seem-
 ingly the most contemptible; having, I say, spent the remaining part of this
 Chapter upon these Topicks, he in the next resumes his Discourse against those
 who looked for Eloquence and Philosophy, and tells them plainly that he came
 not to answer their Expectations. *And I, Brethren*, says he, *when I came unto*
you, came not with Excellency of Speech — not with enticing Words of Man’s Wis-
dom, but in Demonstration, &c. (chap. 2. ver. 1, 4.) *For I determined not to know,*
i. e. to have no farther Concern among you, than plainly and nakedly to de-
 clare unto you *Jesus Christ, and him crucified, that so your Faith might not stand*
in the Wisdom of Men, but in the Power of God, appearing in those Miracles which
 I have wrought in Confirmation of my Doctrines (ver. 2. 5.) And good reason
 was there why the Apostle should go about to prove his Doctrines by the *De-*
monstration of the Spirit, and not as the Philosophers expected, by any Demonstra-
 tion from natural Principles, because the Things which he preached were such
 as could not be known but by Revelation, and therefore could not be proved
 unto those to whom they were not immediately revealed, otherwise than by
 sufficient Testimony that God had revealed them to others. *We speak*, says the
 Apostle, *the Wisdom of God in a Mystery, even the hidden Wisdom which God or-*
dained before the World unto our Glory. Which none of the Princes of this World
knew. — For as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have
entred into the Heart of Man, &c. *i. e.* we declare those Counsels of God con-
 cerning the Salvation of Mankind by Jesus Christ, which were unknown to
 former Ages. But though these Counsels of God were unknown to former
 Ages, yet, says the Apostle, *God hath revealed them unto us* his Apostles, who
 preach them unto you *by his Spirit*, and therefore they are now no longer
 hidden. *For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God; i. e.* he
 is acquainted with all the secret Counsels of God, and therefore we may cer-
 tainly depend upon whatsoever he reveals to us (ver. 10.) *For what Man know-*
eth the things of a Man, save the Spirit of Man which is in him? even so
the things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God; i. e. as no Man knows
 the secret Purposes of another Man, till he thinks fit to discover them him-
 self, so the secret Purposes of God knoweth none, but the Spirit of God
 (ver. 11.) And this is farther expressed by the Apostle (ver. 12.) *We have received*
the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given
us of God; i. e. that we may be instructed in the Knowledge of those things,
 which because they depend entirely upon the Sovereign Will and Pleasure of
 God, could not be known without being revealed. *Which things also we speak,*
not in the Words which Man’s Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth,
comparing spiritual things with spiritual; i. e. proving these Divine Truths, not
 by Philosophical Arguments, but by such Arguments as are proper to prove
 them by, *viz.* by Miracles and former Revelations (ver. 13.) and for this rea-
 son *the natural Man, i. e.* these Philosophers, who will admit of nothing but
 what may be proved from natural Principles, *receiveth not the things of the Spirit,*
i. e. will not embrace these Mysteries which I declare unto you, *for they seem*
Foolishness unto him, and he cannot, so long as he is thus disposed, know or be-
lieve them, because they are spiritually discerned, i. e. because they are to be known,
 under-

understood, and judged of only by that Evidence which the Spirit gives (*viz. the Demonstration of the Spirit*, spoken of *ver. 4.*) which Evidence such a Person is already supposed not to admit of. Whereas *he that is spiritual, i. e.* he who will admit of such Evidence as this, *judgeth all things, i. e.* all these Gospel Mysteries whereof I am now speaking; he is able to prove that they are true, by proving that they are divinely revealed; *but he himself is judged of no Man, i. e.* no Man can confute him, whose Knowledge is thus grounded upon the Evidence of the Spirit. *For who hath known the Mind of the Lord? i. e.* who can pretend to know the Mind of God better than he himself does? And yet those must do so, who contradict what is proved by the *Demonstration of the Spirit*. And therefore this is the certain Foundation of our Knowledge, which must stand when all the Wisdom of the Wise shall perish, that *we have the Mind of Christ, i. e.* are instructed by Christ himself, who came from God (*ver. 14, 15, 16.*)

* BY this time, I suppose, the Reader clearly perceives the Connexion that there is between this controverted Text and what goes before it; and I question not, if he be ingenuous, but he will confess that the Sense here given of it is agreeable to the whole Scope and Design of the Apostle in this Place. Now this being granted, it is evident that this Text does not speak of the inward Operations of the Spirit at all. For if the Operations of the Spirit be here spoken of, they must be spoken of under the Phrases, *the natural Man—he that is spiritual*. But it appears from what has been said, that by the *natural Man* the Apostle does not mean one who hath not the Spirit, nor by the *spiritual Man* one that has; but by the latter he means one who admits of that external Testimony which the Spirit gave to the Truth of the Mysteries of the Gospel by the *Demonstration of Power, i. e.* by the Miracles which the Apostles wrought; and by the former, one who rejected this Evidence, and argued only from natural Principles, according to the Wisdom of the World, which was then in Vogue amongst the Heathen Philosophers. I must own that this Sense of the Word *ψυχικός* and *πνευματικός*, is somewhat unusual; but 'tis a common thing with the sacred Writers to use the same Word at different times under different Significations; and when Words are thus differently used, the only way to fix the true Meaning of them in any particular Place is, to consider what Sense the Context requires. Now I have shewn that the Context in this place does require that the Words *ψυχικός* and *πνευματικός* be interpreted in that Sense which I have put upon them, and by consequence it will be no Exception against this Interpretation, though these Words be not used in the same Sense in any other Part of the sacred Writings. * All I shall add farther is, that if this Text proves any thing in favour of these pretended Operations, it proves that they are necessary; whereas I have already shewn from the nature of the thing that none of these Operations are necessary, and consequently that this Text ought not to be interpreted in favour of these pretended Operations, howsoever else it may or ought to be interpreted. Wherefore to proceed,

§. III. THERE are, Secondly, some other of the above mentioned Texts, which though they speak indeed of the Operations of the Spirit, do not yet concern all Christians in general. † Of this sort is *Joh. 14. 26. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* Which Words were spoken by Christ to his Disciples then present with him, and cannot without a manifest Absurdity be applied to Believers in all Ages. This is farther evident from the same Promise again repeated, *Joh. 16. 13. When he the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth—and shew you things to come.* * Will our Enthusiasts lay claim to the Gift of Prophecy? I hope not. But why then do they alledge these Words to prove that the Spirit guides them into all Truth, or (which is the same thing) teaches them

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them all things, when it is evident that they contain a Promise of the one as well as of the other? They will perhaps distinguish here, and say, that though the former Promise was particular, yet the latter was general, and related to Christians in all Ages. But do the Words afford a Foundation for any such Distinction? Does our Saviour say that the Spirit should in all Ages *guide Men into all Truth*? Or is there any thing from whence it can rationally be inferred that this was his Meaning? No, the Promises are both expressed after the same manner: *He shall teach you; He shall guide you; He shall shew you*: By consequence it does not appear that the one was a general Promise any more than the other. Of the same sort are those Words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 2. 10. *But God hath revealed them (i. e. the Mysteries of the Gospel) to us by his Spirit*. And ver. 12. *We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God*. For in these Words, as I have already shewn, the Apostle speaks only of himself, and the other inspired Teachers, by whom the Gospel had been preached to the *Corinthians*, and declares what God had done for them, not what he had done or would do for all Believers in general. Of the same sort likewise is that Place of St. John, 1 Joh. 2. 20. *Ye have an Unction from the holy One, and know all things*. And ver. 27. *But the anointing which ye have received abideth in you, and ye need not that any Man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things*. From these Words our Adversaries would infer, that in those Days all Christians in general were anointed with the Holy Ghost, and so immediately instructed by the Holy Ghost; for *this anointing taught them all things*, insomuch that *they needed not that any Man should teach them*. But why do these Men infer from hence that all Christians in those Days were anointed with the Holy Ghost? The Apostle I am sure affirms no such thing. For at ver. 20. he only says, *Ye have an Unction*; at ver. 27. he says, *The anointing which ye have received abideth in you*, (not *in*, but) *among you*. Now that the Christians having in those Times an Unction or an anointing abiding among them, does not imply that they were all of them in general anointed, will appear very evident if we consider what this anointing means. There were then, as every one knows, in the primitive Churches several inspired Teachers, who were endued with the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, by which they bare Testimony to the Gospel that it was from God. Now these Gifts being a Mark of God's special Favour to those upon whom they were bestowed, not only as they thereby enjoyed a Privilege not common to the rest of their Brethren, but moreover as they were thereby consecrated or set apart to Places of more than ordinary Eminence in the Church of Christ, such Persons were therefore said to be *anointed with the Holy Ghost*; and these are they which St. John, by an usual Metonymy of the Accident for the Subject, calls the (a) *Unction* or the *anointing*. The Sense of the Apostle therefore is plainly this: *Ye have an Unction from the holy One, i. e. Ye have among you Persons anointed by the Holy Ghost, and by them ye know, i. e. are taught and instructed in all things*. Again, *The anointing which ye have received abideth among you, i. e. as ye have from the very first had among you inspired Teachers, so ye have at this time; and therefore ye need not that any Man should teach you, seeing the same anointing teacheth you of all things*. This Interpretation being once allowed, 'tis plain that our Enthusiasts will be able to gain no Advantage from the Words of the Apostle. And I think it ought to be allowed, not only because 'tis easy and natural, but because 'tis contrary to the Language of the Scripture to say (what these Men do, and what indeed must be said if this Interpretation be not admitted of) of common Christians, that they are or were anointed of the Holy Ghost. To anoint with the Holy Ghost signifies in the Phraseology of the holy Scriptures to consecrate, separate, or set apart any Person to some sacred Office by the Holy Ghost, in Allusion to the Ceremo-

(a) See Dr. Hammond's Annot. on Acts 10. &c.

ny of consecrating Kings, Prophets, and Priests, which was anciently performed by anointing them with Oil. Hence Christ is said to have been anointed with the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 10. 38. *Chap.* 4. 27. *Luke* 4. 18. Hence also the Apostles, and other Ministers of Christ, who had the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost bestowed upon them, were said to be (b) anointed, *2 Cor.* 1. 21. But private Christians are not said to be anointed with the Holy Ghost; this is contrary to the Scripture way of speaking. If it be said, that however the Phrase is used in other Places of Scripture, it must in this Place be applied to common Christians, because the Apostle expressly says, *Ye need not that any Man teach you*; I answer, that to interpret those Words as if the Christians in those Days had absolutely no need of teaching, is to make the Apostle affirm that which was certainly false. Undoubtedly the Christians in those Days as well as now had great need of teaching; for why else did Christ appoint an Order of Preachers? Why were *Elders ordained in every City*? Bishops set over every Church, with a Command to *feed the Flock of Christ*, if all this while Christians were able sufficiently to instruct themselves? The Words therefore must necessarily be understood in a limited and comparative Signification: *Ye need not that any Man teach you*, i. e. ye have the less occasion to be instructed by me or any one else, seeing ye have an anointing among your selves, i. e. seeing ye have in every Church inspired Teachers of your own, who are able fully to inform you in those Things whereof I am now speaking to you. To conclude. Of the same sort with those above mentioned is that famous Text of the Prophet *Joel*, chap. 2. ver. 28, 29. *And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesy, your Old Men shall dream Dreams, your Young Men shall see Visions; and also upon the Servants and upon the Handmaids in those Days will I pour out my Spirit, and* (as St. Peter adds, *Acts* 2. 18.) *they shall prophesy*. That this Promise does not concern all Christians in general, nor indeed Christians in every Age, is evident, 1. From the Nature of the Gifts here mentioned, which are all of them extraordinary and miraculous, *Your Sons and your Daughters shall PROPHECY, your Old Men shall DREAM DREAMS, your Young Men shall SEE VISIONS*. 2. Because here is a particular Time limited, wherein this Promise should be fulfilled, *It shall come to pass AFTERWARDS, i. e.* (as St. Peter explains that Word in the Place above cited) *in the last Days*. Now *the last Days* do in the Scripture Language frequently signify (c) the End of the Jewish State. And that they are to be so interpreted in this Prophecy is plain from what follows, *And I will shew Wonders in the Heaven and the Earth, Blood and Fire, and Pillars of Smoke, the Sun shall be turned into Darkeness, and the Moon into Blood, before that great and terrible Day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the Lord shall be saved*. Which Words do evidently relate to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the remarkable Escape which the Christians should make therefrom, and are exactly parallel to *Matth.* 24. 29. *Mark* 13. 14, &c. 24. &c. *Luke* 21. 11, 20, &c. where the same dismal Overthrow, and the Delivery of the Christians, are foretold. 3. St. Peter assures us that this Prophecy related particularly to that great and plentiful Effusion of the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost at the Day of Pentecost. *These Men*, says he (meaning the Apostles and others who spake with Tongues) *are not drunk, as ye suppose — but*

(b) The learned Dr. Hammond in his Annotations upon *Acts* 10. 38. tells us that the Use of this Phrase is sometimes enlarged to all faithful Christians. The only Place he has produced to prove this is *2 Cor.* 1. 21. Now he which stablisheth us with you, and hath anointed us, is God. But this Instance in my humble Opinion, is so far from proving his Assertion, that it rather makes against it. For it is by no means necessary to suppose that by the *US* in the latter part of the Verse (to which only the Verb *hath anointed* relates) the Apostle meant himself and all the *Corinthians*; nay, I think the very manner wherein he has expressed himself evidently shews, that by it he meant only Himself, *Sylvanus*, and *Timotheus*, spoken of immediately before. He does not say, *he which stablisheth, and hath anointed us with you*, but *he which stablisheth us with you, and hath anointed us*. A clear Indication, in my Judgment, that tho' the being stablished was a thing common to them, and to all faithful Christians, yet the being anointed was not.

(c) See Dr. Hammond upon the Place.

this is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel, *And it shall come to pass in the last Days, &c.* It is said indeed that this Promise must be general, because it is by the Prophet extended to *all Flesh, i. e.* to all Persons; and because the Apostle, speaking of the same Promise to the Jews, says, *it is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off,* Acts 2. 39. But will these Men always argue from general Expressions after the same manner? How easily then might they prove from Scripture, against common Sense and Experience, that the Power of working Miracles belongs to every Christian! For thus says our Saviour, *Mark 16. 17. These Signs shall follow them that believe; in my Name they shall cast out Devils, they shall speak with new Tongues, &c.* Will our Enthusiasts dare to pretend to such Gifts as these? No, they will not. And yet they are promised to *them that believe*, which Phrase as much comprehends every Christian, as the Phrase *all Flesh* comprehends every Person. From this therefore, and numberless Instances that might quickly be produced, it is evident that general Terms are not always to be taken in their full Latitude: And it may be observed farther, that this Promise is expressly limited by St. Peter in the Place above mentioned. For he does not say absolutely that it belongs to all, but *to all, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* But supposing it were granted that this Promise was a general Promise; I see not, for my Part, what Advantage they would gain by such a Concession. For that every Part of the Promise is general cannot be pretended, because it cannot be pretended that *Prophefying, dreaming Dreams, and seeing Visions,* are common Gifts. The only Part therefore of this Promise which can be pretended to be general is, that God will *pour out his Spirit.* Well, and doubtless he will in all Ages do this, whether it be promised here or not. But that God will in all Ages pour out his Spirit in such a manner as these Men pretend remains still to be proved, but can never be proved either from this or any other Place of Scripture. For,

§. IV. THIRDLY, The remaining Texts do speak only of the Operations of the Spirit in general, and by consequence can be no Proofs for any particular Sort or Kind of Operation whatsoever. Thus *Joh. xiv. 16, 17. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth.* So *Joh. 6. 45. They shall all be taught of God; whosoever therefore hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me.* So likewise *1 Cor. 3. 16. Ye are the Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.* And that of *Rom. 8. 14. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.* From these Texts, I say, and a Hundred more of the same sort, it is evident that our Adversaries can have no Proof of their pretended Operations. For that the Comforter will abide with us for ever we grant; that he will teach us, dwell in us, and lead us, we also allow. But how will he teach, dwell in, and lead us? After the same manner wherein he taught, dwelt in, and led the Apostles, *i. e.* by immediate Inspiration? This is what they say, and what they ought to prove; but let them prove it when they can. I might have been a great deal more large in examining these and the foregoing Texts of Scripture, but I should then have swelled this Discourse to too large a Size. Wherefore if there be any one whom these short Observations will not satisfy, I must recommend him to Dr. Bennet's *Confutation of Quakerism* (whose Interpretations I have mostly followed) where he will find these Places of Scripture, and whatever else our Adversaries have made use of to the same Purpose, thoroughly canvassed, and in my Judgment, solidly and satisfactorily replied to.

§. V. I SHOULD now proceed to consider what is alledged from Scripture to prove that the Spirit does now call Men to the Work of the Ministry by immediate Inspiration. But this Notion being wholly founded upon the Manner wherein God was pleased to call the Prophets and Apostles (from whence it is evident there can be no arguing to what he will do in these Days) I shall there-

fore

fore pass it over without any farther Notice, and go on to those Texts which are produced to shew that the Spirit suggests Words and Matter to Men when they pray, which are but two. † The first is that of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 14. 15. *I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the Understanding also.* † P. 218. * Now, 1. supposing that to pray with the Spirit does (as these Men presume) signify to pray by the help or Assistance of the Spirit, yet would it not prove the thing in question. For not to mention that these Words *I will pray &c.* do not appear to contain a Promise, much less a general Promise, it is evident that he prays by the Help or Assistance of the Spirit, whom the Spirit inspires with Fervency and Devotion, as much as he who has either the Words or the Matter of his Prayers suggested to him. But, 2. To pray with the Spirit does not in this place signify to pray by the Help or Assistance of the Spirit, as will appear plain to any one who considers the Coherence of these Words with the foregoing Part of the Chapter, where the Design of the Apostle was to shew the Excellency of the Gift of Prophecy, *i. e.* of interpreting Scripture, above that of Tongues. For thus he speaks (ver. 1.) *Follow after Charity, and desire spiritual Gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.* The Reason hereof is assigned in the following Words, *For he that speaketh in an unknown Tongue speaketh not unto Men, but unto God, for no Man understandeth him — But he that prophesieth speaketh unto Men to Edification — He that speaketh in an unknown Tongue edifieth himself, but he that prophesieth edifieth the Church,* ver. 2, 3, 4. This Argument is farther urged by the Apostle, ver. 6. *Now, Brethren, if I come unto you speaking with Tongues, what shall I profit you except I shall speak to you, i. e. except (d) ye understand the Language wherein I speak, whether I speak to you either by Revelation or by Knowledge, or by prophesying or by Doctrine? And withal he backs it with this Similitude, Even things without Life giving Sound, except they give a Distinction in the Sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? — So likewise you, except ye utter by the Tongue Words easy to be understood. i. e. intelligible Words, how shall it be known what is spoken? ver. 7, 9. At ver. 14. he proceeds to apply this particularly to the Business of Prayer. If, says he, I pray in an unknown Tongue, my Spirit prayeth, but my Understanding is unfruitful, i. e. my Mind prayeth, or I do my self pray, because I understand my own Words, but then what I thus understand is unfruitful, i. e. unprofitable to others, who do not understand it as well as I. What is it then that must be done in this Case? Why, I will pray with the Spirit, i. e. I will pray with my Mind, and I will pray with the Understanding also, i. e. I will pray in such a Language as others understand, ver. 15. For else when thou shalt bless, i. e. give Thanks with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned, i. e. how shall any one of the People say Amen at thy giving of Thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayst? For thou verily givest Thanks well, but the other is not edified, ver. 16, 17. From all this it appears that in the Sense of the Apostle in this Place every one prays τὸ πνεῦμα with the Spirit who does (e) himself pray, and he prays τὸ νοῦν with the Understanding who prays in a Language understood by the People, so as that the People may edify thereby. †*

§. VI. THE other Text alledged to prove that the Spirit suggests Words and Matter to us when we pray is “Rom. 8. 26, 27. *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth*” P. 219. 18
“*our Infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spi-*” 23.

(d) That this is the Meaning of the Phrase ἐν ᾗ ὁμοῦ λαλῶ is evident from ver. 2. where the Apostle says, *that he who speaketh in an unknown Tongue, i. e. in such a Language as Men cannot understand, ὡς ἀνθρώποις λαλεῖ, doth not speak to Men.* This Observation may serve to render the Sense of this Verse natural and easy, which otherwise is, I think, scarce intelligible.

(e) Our Author dismisses this Text only with saying, that by *praying with the Spirit* is here meant *using the Gift of Tongues in Prayer*, following herein Dr. Hammond, who renders the Phrase τὸ πνεῦμά μου προσεύχεται, *my Gift, or the Gift of Tongues, which I use prays.* This Interpretation seems to be somewhat harsh, and withal not very consistent with the Scope of the Apostle in this Chapter. But I shall not contend about it, because if it be allowed, the Text (as any one must observe) will, if possible, less favour the Pretensions of our Adversaries than if it be interpreted the other way.

“rit it self maketh Intercession for us with Groanings that cannot be uttered. And he
 “that searcheth the Hearts knoweth what is the Mind of the Spirit, because he maketh
 “Intercession for the Saints according to the Will of God. This Text indeed carries
 “with it a more likely Appearance than the former. But I shall endeavour
 “to shew the true Meaning of it, and then leave the Reader to judge whether
 “that which these Men pretend can be concluded from it or not.

“IN the 17th Verse of this Chapter St. Paul begins to comfort the Christians
 “under their Afflictions, shewing them that they who suffered with Christ
 “should be also glorified together. This Consideration affords two Arguments
 “for Patience, which the Apostle distinctly notes, the former being the trans-
 “cendent Greatness of that Glory which they hoped for, the latter the Profit-
 “ableness of their present Sufferings to prepare them for that Glory. The first
 “of these Arguments we have ver. 18. *For I reckon that the Sufferings of this pre-
 “sent Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed
 “in us.* From which Verse to the 24th he proceeds to shew, that as in God’s
 “good Time the Heathens would be rescued from their Idolatries, so the
 “Christians should be rescued from their Sufferings also. Wherefore at present
 “he would have them take Comfort in the Hope of that Deliverance and
 “Glory which was yet to come. *For, saith he, we are saved by Hope, &c. ver. 24.
 “But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with Patience wait for it, ver. 25.*
 The other Argument, viz. the Profitableness of their present Sufferings, to pre-
 pare them for that Glory which they hoped for, we have at ver. 28. *“We know
 “that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called
 “according to his Purpose, i. e. who resolutely adhere to the Profession where-
 “unto they are called notwithstanding all these Sufferings. For whom he did
 “foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might
 “be the first born among many Brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them
 “he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified,
 “them he also glorified, ver. 29, 30. i. e. It is not only true that God will turn
 “these Sufferings to our Advantage, but we are to consider also, that those
 “whom God fore-knew or fore-appointed for his Children, were fore-appointed
 “to Sufferings, that in this Respect also we might be like our Elder Brother
 “Christ Jesus, who hath shewn us this Way of coming to the Joy that is set
 “before us; wherefore we are not to wonder if we be called to Sufferings
 “now, seeing upon our patient enduring of them God will justify, i. e. own us
 “for sincere Persons, and reward us eternally. What shall we say then to these
 “things? If God be for us who can be against us? ver. 31. Who shall separate us
 “from the Love of Christ? Shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, &c.? Nay,
 “in all these things we are more than Conquerors, ver. 35, 36, 37. These are
 “the Arguments which the Apostle makes use of to encourage them to Pa-
 “tience. But he makes way for the second by what he saith ver. 26, 27. (which
 “are the Words in dispute) *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities for we
 “know not what to pray for as we ought, &c.* For it is plain by those Words
 “likewise, also, that he was now offering to them a farther Consideration, why
 “they ought with Patience to wait for the Glory which they hoped for. And
 “that which he proceeds to shew, is the Mistake of thinking that it were
 “better to be exempted from the Sufferings which they then laboured under,
 “since in Matters of this nature we know not what is best, and consequent-
 “ly know not what to pray for in particular.” Therefore, says he, *the Spirit
 συναντιλαμβάνεται τοῖς ἀδυνάτοις ἡμῶν joins in relieving us under our Distresses, by making
 Intercession for us, i. e. either (as Origen, St. Ambrose, and Dr. Hammond interpret
 it) by interceding actually himself on our Behalf, or (as St. Chrysostom, St.
 Austin, St. Jerom and Theodoret understand it) by exciting us to pray for our selves
 στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις with unuttered Groanings, i. e. vehemently and powerfully, or
 not precisely for this or that, but in general for that only which is best and
 fittest for us. And he that searcheth the Heart knoweth what is the Mind of the
 Spirit**

Spirit, and ἐν ἑαυτῷ *that he maketh Intercession for the Saints according to the Will of God.* i. e. God knows that what the Spirit thus vehemently asks, or excites us to ask, is not absolutely that we may be delivered from our Afflictions, but only that we may have that which God seeth best for us. Now such Prayers as these being agreeable to his Will, we may be sure they shall be heard, and consequently that if our Afflictions continue they shall *work together for our Good.*

* THUS I have given you the true Sense and Meaning of these Words of the Apostle, and from what has been said it is evident, 1. That they relate only to the Matter of our Prayers, and not at all to the Words wherein they are conceived. 2. That though they relate to the Matter of our Prayers, yet they do not relate to the Matter of our Prayers universally, i. e. when the Apostle says *we know not what to pray for*, his Meaning is not that we do not in any Case know what to pray for (for this he could not truly have affirmed, seeing the Matter of our Prayers has in general been taught us by our Lord himself) but that in the particular Case of Temporal Afflictions, of which he was then speaking, we know not whether to pray for Deliverance or not. 3. That when the Apostle says *the Spirit helps our Infirmities*, he does not mean that he teaches us particularly what to pray for. For he helps our Infirmities by making Intercession for us, by which if you understand that the Spirit actually interceeds, 'tis plain then that his helping our Infirmities will not signify any thing which he enables us to do, but something which he himself does on our Behalf. If on the other hand you understand hereby that the Spirit helps or excites us to pray for our selves, yet still it is *with Groanings that cannot be uttered.* Now by this you must understand either, 1. That the Spirit enables us to pray with an unutterable or inexpressible Vehemency. Or, 2. That he excites us to groan, i. e. pray earnestly for such things as are not to be uttered, i. e. expressed by Words. If the latter, it is then granted that the Spirit does not teach us what to pray for; for that which a Man knows is not unutterable. If the former, then the Words do not imply that the Spirit teaches us what to pray for; for 'tis certain that a Man may pray with an inexpressible Vehemency, whether what he prays for be taught him immediately by the Spirit or not. And now whether this Text does in the least favour the Pretensions of our Adversaries, I leave any sober and impartial Man to determine. †

§. VII. I COME now in the last place to consider those Texts which are brought to prove that the Spirit gives Men an absolute Assurance of their Eternal Salvation; and of these likewise there are but two which deserve to be taken notice of. "The first is that of St. Paul, Eph. 4. 30. *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the Day of Redemption.* Now by Believers being sealed, &c. some have thought that a Testimony of the Spirit, whereby they are absolutely assured that they shall be saved, must needs be meant. But, 1. The Words are fairly capable of another Meaning, viz. That the Gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon Believers, were an Evidence that God was now preparing them for the Kingdom of Heaven, and consequently that he had a peculiar Right to their Obedience. For this we know is one Use of *Sealing*, viz. to distinguish that which of Right belongs to our selves from what is common. Thus when it is said that *God the Father hath sealed Christ*, Joh. 6. 27. the Meaning is, that by the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon him he owned him to be his Son, and marked him out as that great Prophet who was to declare his Will to Mankind. And thus are all Believers marked out for God's Peculiar, by the eminent Advantages of the Gospel, and particularly by the Gifts and Graces of his holy Spirit, and are therefore said to be sealed thereby. 2. The Words are not only capable of this Sense, but the Coherence with the foregoing and following Verses, and the Reason of St. Paul's Exhortation, do necessarily re-

quire it. *Let him, says he, that stole steal no more; Let no corrupt Communications proceed out of your Mouth, &c. Let all Bitterness and Wrath, &c. be put away.* The Argument with which he enforceth these Exhortations is, that otherwise they would grieve the holy Spirit, by which they were sealed, &c. *i. e.* they would plainly contradict the End for which God had bestowed the Gifts of his Spirit upon them, and thereby marked them out for his Children. This would be to grieve the holy Spirit, *i. e.* to bereave themselves of his gracious Presence and so to come in danger of being excluded for ever out of the Rest of God, as it was with the Israelites in the Wilderness, with whom God was grieved Forty Years, and he swore in his Wrath that they should not enter into his Rest. Now this Consideration could have been of no Force at all if they had been absolutely sure of their Inheritance; whereas it must be granted to be very prevailing, on Supposition that by *Sealing* is here meant their being as it were consecrated to a Life of Holiness by the Spirit of God. For then they would find little Excuse, and a greater Punishment, for their unchristian Practices, if, being so greatly obliged, they should prove unthankful and disobedient.

P. 217.

§. VIII. THE other Place is that of the same Apostle, *Rom. viii. 16. The Spirit it self beareth Witness with our Spirit that we are the Children of God.* But, 1. This Testimony of the Spirit is that publick Testimony which was given by the Spirit that Christians are the Children of God. For it is said in the foregoing Verse that they had received the Spirit of Adoption, which being opposed to the Spirit of Bondage, shews the Apostle's Meaning to be, that the Christians were the Children of the Promise, and ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας of the Free Woman, as he expresseth it, *Gal. 4. 28.* Whereas the Jews, *i. e.* those of them that were under the Law, answered the Condition of Ishmael, who was ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης the Son of the Bond Woman, to whom there was no Promise of an Inheritance. Now that none but Christians were the Sons of God, and Heirs of the promised Inheritance, was that which was testified against the Jews, by the Miracles and supernatural Gifts of the Apostles and primitive Believers, *i. e.* by the Testimony of the Spirit. And then this Text is very far from intending any immediate Testimony of the Holy Ghost to our Minds that we are God's Children. 2. All that is here affirmed regards only our present State, that we are the Children of God, which if we be, it is certainly possible for us to be assured of it; nay, we cannot be ignorant of our Spiritual Condition without our own Fault, since we have so plain a Rule to try our selves by as the Word of God. *By this we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.* Now our keeping of God's Commandments is that which our own Spirit or Conscience must witness, and then the Revelation of the Gospel (wherein to be sure is the Witness of the Spirit) will witness to us that we are the Children of God. All which may very well be without our believing that it is absolutely impossible for us to forfeit our Inheritance by any future Miscarriage; and therefore from this Place it cannot be concluded that such an Assurance is given us by the holy Spirit.

P. 211. to 215.

§. IX. AND thus I have examined those Texts of Scripture upon which the above mentioned pretended Operations of the Spirit are principally founded, and shewn, I hope, that they infer no such Matters as are desired to be concluded from them. "If after all this any Man should say that he knows by the Light of the Spirit that these Interpretations are nothing better than Carnal Reasoning, I confess it will prove a good difficult Matter to give a satisfactory Reply to such a Pretender. For what Success can any Man promise himself by replying to a confident Enthusiast, who perpetually appeals from the most evident Reasons, the plainest Testimonies of Scripture, and the most rational Inferences from them to the Testimony of the Spirit?

"How-

“ However, this I will venture to say (howsoever such a Man may please himself
 “ with the Conceit of his being supernaturally enlightened) that these Texts
 “ are impertinently produced to convince us, who do not pretend to such a Gift,
 “ nor own that there are a sort of Persons upon whom God bestows that Privi-
 “ lege.” If indeed they could by real and undoubted Miracles prove themselves
 to be divinely inspired, it would be an Answer sufficient to any Thing we could
 say; but seeing this is what they neither do nor can pretend to, they have no
 other way to convince us that the Sense which they put upon any Text of Scrip-
 ture is true, than by rational Evidence, which is what we are very ready to submit
 our selves to. If they are not, ’tis an absurd thing for them to pretend to ar-
 gue from Scripture at all, because they must in their whole Course of arguing
 appeal to a Principle, the very being whereof we absolutely deny. “ And this
 “ is all I can hope to bring such Men as these to, *viz.* to confess their own
 “ Impertinence, in offering any Testimony of Scripture for the justifying their
 “ Pretensions, and that when all is done, they have nothing to say but this,
 “ that *the Spirit tells them* that this is the true Sense and Meaning of the Scrip-
 “ ture, without enabling them to make it appear to any Body else. But if this
 “ be all, and another Man is able to shew by convincing Arguments that the
 “ Sense which they contend for is not the true, I think, for my part, that
 “ such Persons are thereby proved to pretend falsely to Inspiration, and in plain
 “ English he must be a very Fool, who does not prefer the Interpretation of the
 “ latter before the Interpretation of the former. If it should be said last of all,
 “ that though God has no where promised the forementioned Operations, yet,
 “ for ought we know, he may be better than his Word; I answer, that as I
 “ am in no wise bound to contradict this Supposition,” so neither am I bound
 to, nor shall believe that God actually is so, barely for this Reason, because he
 may be. And so much for the second Question propounded.

CHAP. VI.

Concerning the Persons to whom the Spirit is promised and given.

§. I. **H**AVING shown you what those Effects are, for the producing of ^{P. 233. to}
 which in the Minds of Men, God will give his Spirit in all Ages; ^{237.}
 and also what the Spirit does towards the producing these Effects; I come now
 to enquire, **THIRDLY**, Who they are to whom the Spirit is promised, and
 upon whom it will be bestowed. To speak clearly to which Matter, I must
 observe to you beforehand, that the Operations of the Spirit are of two Sorts,
viz. 1. Such as go before our Belief of the Gospel, and our very first Desires to
 know and do the Will of God, which Operations I call common. 2. Such as
 follow after to cherish and improve such good Beginnings in us, and to endue us
 with all Qualifications necessary to eternal Life, which Operations, I call special.
 Between these two sorts of Operations there is this remarkable Difference, *viz.*
 That whereas the Promises of the latter are all of them conditional, to the for-
 mer there are no Conditions annexed. Nor indeed could there have been any.
 For how is it possible that we should do any thing towards the Attainment of
 that Grace which is necessary to put us at first into the way of well doing?

§. II. **T**HIS being premised, I affirm, First, That the common Operations of ^{P. 261. to}
 the Spirit are “given (a) to all those who live under the Ministration of the” ^{269.}

(a) By this our Author does not mean to exclude those from the Grace of God who do not live under
 the Ministration of the Gospel. But his Design being (as appears from Introduction, p. 2.) to speak of such
 Operations of the Spirit only as are promised in the Gospel, it was not therefore proper to include them, as
 he observes, *Answer to Mr. H's Animadvers.* at the end of the II^d. Part, p. 74.

“ Gospel: My Meaning is, that they are all prevented with that Grace which
 “ makes it possible for them to begin well, *i. e.* to desire the Knowledge of
 “ God’s Will, and then to be convinced that the Gospel is the Word of God,
 “ by the use of those external Means which God has afforded them. I do not
 “ say that every one of them hath this Grace always bestowed upon him. For
 “ ’tis possible that some of those to whom the Word of God is spoken, may
 “ put it away from themselves, and be at length forsaken by the Divine Spirit.
 “ But what I say is, that that Grace which is necessary to qualify or dispose us to
 “ embrace the Gospel, is given to as many as have the Gospel preached to them,
 “ so that until by their Obstinacy they have forfeited the Divine Blessing, it is in
 “ their Power to attend to the Word of God, and receive the Knowledge of the
 “ Truth.” There needs no other Argument to prove this Assertion by, than “those
 “ Texts of Scripture wherein those to whom the Gospel is preached are threatned
 “ with eternal Damnation if they believe it not, and with more grievous Punish-
 “ ments than would be inflicted upon them if they had never heard it. Thus says
 “ our Saviour to his Apostles, *Mark 16. 16. He that believeth and is baptized shall be*
 “ *saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.* Again, *John 3. 18. He that*
 “ *believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the*
 “ *only begotten Son of God.* Farther; the Severity of that Punishment which
 “ belongs to them that believe not, is intimated plainly in the Aggravation of
 “ their Fault, *John 15. 22. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not*
 “ *had Sin, but now they have no Cloak for their Sin.* But it is fully expressed *Matt.*
 “ *11. 20.* where we find our Saviour upbraiding the Cities which rejected him,
 “ and declaring that it should be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, and Sodom
 “ in the Day of Judgment, than for them. From these and such like Places of
 “ Scripture, I say, it is abundantly evident, that that preventing Grace which
 “ is necessary to enable Men to believe, shall be given to as many as have the
 “ Gospel preached to them. For to say that God requires impossible things of
 “ any Man, and so takes Advantage against him to cast him into fiercer Flames,
 “ where he must burn for ever, is to blaspheme all his Attributes, but those
 “ which make him great and powerful. God is pleased to expostulate with
 “ Men because of their Disobedience, from the relation which they bear to
 “ him as his Children and Servants. *If I be a Father, where is mine Honour?*
 “ *And if I be a Master, where is my Fear?* *Mal. 1. 6.* Now can we think he has
 “ given any Man Reason to retort that Expostulation in this manner. If thou
 “ art a Father, where are thy Bowels? If thou art a Master, where is thy Justice?
 “ For Kindness belongs as necessarily to the Character of a good Father, and
 “ Justice to that of a good Master, as Obedience and Fear do to that of a good
 “ Child or Servant. And we are to remember that God hath appealed to the
 “ common Principles of Reason impressed upon the Minds of Men, in Justifi-
 “ cation of the Equity and Mercy of his Proceedings towards them, as you may
 “ see *Isa. 1. 18. Ezech. 18. 25.* But to inflict a more grievous Punishment, and
 “ that eternal, for not performing an impossible Condition, is in its own
 “ Nature unjust and cruel, and therefore cannot stand with the Goodness of a
 “ Father, nor with the Justice of a Master, nor with God’s pleading with Men
 “ from these Relations, and the Appeals he makes to their own Minds for the
 “ Righteousness of his Dealings, which upon these Terms it is impossible for
 “ them to acknowledge, unless they lay aside the brightest Principles of their
 “ Reason. If there are some things so evil that they can never be good, then
 “ some things there are which we cannot ascribe to God without Blasphemy.
 “ Now if the inflicting eternal Torments upon Men for what they could never
 “ help, be not one of those things, I desire any Man to tell me what is. I
 “ shall have Occasion to debate this Matter farther by and by; but in the mean
 “ time let any one contrive some undeniable Instance of barbarous Injustice,
 “ which without Question may easily be done, and when he has given us his
 “ Idea of it, I will undertake to reconcile the fastening it upon God, with the
 “ Honour of his Attributes, as easily as he can secure the Divine Justice
 “ and

“ and Goodness, whilst he makes God to oblige Men to Impossibilities, upon pain of eternal Damnation. But if there be no Difference between Right and Wrong; if we know nothing so good or so evil but it may cease to be so, then the Divine Perfections may cease too, and so farewell to the Notion of God, and the Certainty of any thing in Religion. And if this be not the last Result of that Doctrine which makes believing, and consequently obeying the Gospel, impossible from the very first, to those that will be damned for not doing so, I leave to any indifferent Person to consider.” * It is pretended, I know, that this Impossibility of believing the Gospel of our selves, or by our own natural Strength, having been occasioned through our own Fault, *i. e.* by the Sin we were guilty of in our first Parents, God is not therefore obliged to supply this Defect by new Grace, in order to vindicate his Justice in condemning us for not believing. But this Pretence being also alledged by the same Persons to save themselves from charging God with Injustice, in denying that he gives sufficient Grace to Believers to enable them to obey the Gospel, I shall reserve the Examination of it till I come to speak of that Matter. † In the mean while I shall venture to conclude with what I at first asserted, *viz.* That that Grace which is necessary to qualify or dispose us to believe the Gospel, is given to as many as have the Gospel preached to them. We do not indeed find any express Promise of this in the Holy Scriptures, and there is this reason to be given why we do not, *viz.* “ That it would have been of little or no Use either to those who believe already (because they need not that Grace which is proper to beget Faith at first, and consequently need not a Promise of that Grace) or to those who do not believe; for of whatever use such a Promise could be to any Man, it must suppose the Belief of it, which he would want who does not yet believe the Gospel to be a Divine Revelation. But though there be no Promise of common Grace expressly made to all that hear the Gospel, yet there is an implicit Promise thereof, contained partly under that Obligation which the Gospel lays upon all that hear it to believe, and partly under those Passages of Scripture which” teach us that the Grace of God is necessary to believing: For since no Man can be justly obliged to impossible Conditions upon pain of Damnation, and since Faith is a Condition which the Gospel requires of us upon Pain of Damnation, therefore if the Grace of God be necessary to Faith, God will give it in such a Measure to all that hear the Gospel preached, that it shall be possible for them to believe; “ which is so clear a Consequence, that the very naming of it would have been sufficient, had not some Men (to the great Reproach and Dishonour of the Divine Majesty) gotten a Custom of imputing the Want of Faith to a Defect on God’s Part, as if he had not given them Grace enough to believe.” All I shall add is, that this implicit Promise of common Grace “ is not properly a Part of the New Covenant, because, as I said before, it is a Promise without a Condition; but it is an absolute Promise of an Act of Grace antecedent to the Covenant, and which the Covenant supposes, because without it the Conditions of it would be impossible.”

§. III. AND thus much for the Persons who are the Subjects of common Grace; I come now to shew who are the Subjects of special. And they are all those who perform the Conditions upon which it is promised: On the contrary, we must exclude those from the special Grace of God, who do not perform those Conditions upon which the Promise of it depends. The former Part of this Assertion, I hope stands in need of no other Medium to prove it by, than that God is faithful, and will not deceive us. The latter is evident from the Reason of the thing it self: For the Limitation of any Promise by certain Conditions, does in itself exclude all reasonable Ground of Expectation of the thing promised, in any where those Conditions are wanting. Wherefore 1. So much Grace as is necessary to lead us to that Obedience which is

indispensably required in order to Salvation, God will give to every one who humbly and devoutly prays to him for it. For this is the Condition, and the only Condition prescribed by our Saviour, *Luke 11. 9, 10.* where the Promise of the Spirit is made: *I say unto you ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you: For EVERY ONE that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.* 2. When Men have received that Grace which is necessary to lead them to Obedience, and have made a due Use and Improvement thereof, *i. e.* are thereby actually led to a Conformity to the Divine Will, God will then upon their asking, grant to every one of them a greater Measure of his Grace; that so they may farther improve and grow in Vertue and Goodness, continuing the Increase of Grace from time to time according to the Measure of those Improvements. This is not obscurely intimated in those Places of Scripture where God is said to DWELL in Men; which Phrase denotes a more peculiar Presence of God with them, *i. e.* a more plentiful Effusion of the Divine Grace. Now who they are in whom God dwells, the Apostle has told us, *1. John 23. 4. He that keepeth his Commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him.* But it is expressly affirmed in that Saying which we so often meet with in the Gospel, *to him that hath shall be given,* which clearly implies, that special Grace is communicated to Men in Proportion to those Degrees wherein the Grace formerly received has been improved by them. Wherefore we must not expect any new Accession of Grace to that which we have received altogether in vain. Nay, on the contrary, we have reason to believe that God will withdraw that Grace which he has already given, from those slothful Persons who do not take Care to make a proper Use and Improvement of it. Indeed, how long he will extend his Patience towards such, and bear with their Obstinacy, God has reserved to his own sovereign Will; but that he will not always bear with them is evident from the Words of our Saviour, who at the same time that he promises us, that *to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly,* assures us likewise, that *from him that hath, i. e. improveth not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.*

* §. IV. * Thus then you see who are the Subjects of Divine Grace, both common and special. Common Grace is given to all without Exception, that have the Gospel preached to them; special Grace is given to all that ask it, only in different Degrees according as the Grace formerly received hath been improved with more or less Diligence. Now from what has been said upon this last Head, we may make these two plain Inferences. The first is, That as *(b) believing* is possible to all that hear the Gospel, so Obedience is possible to all that believe. For since that is certainly possible which God gives sufficient Grace or Assistance to perform; since he has promised to all that will but ask him for it, so much Grace as is sufficient to enable them to obey the Gospel;

(b) The Reader is desired to take Notice once for all, that throughout this whole Argument it is supposed, and taken for granted, that Men are endued with sufficient *Natural Abilities.* For the Gospel is proposed to Men as to reasonable Creatures; and the Grace of God is not intended to make wise Men of Fools, but to teach us to use those Powers or Faculties with which we are naturally endued, to the best Purposes, to which in themselves they are capable of being applied. This Inference must not therefore be so rigidly urged, as to be made to extend to every individual Person, to whom the Gospel may be preached: For certain it is, that there are many Hearers, who neither do, nor can believe, not having a competent Measure of Understanding, to enable them to discover that Evidence upon which Christianity is built; and I believe it is no less true, that of those who in the gross are convinced, that the Gospel is *the Power and Wisdom of God unto Salvation,* there are those who (through the like Weakness of Understanding) do unavoidably err, with respect to the Sense and Meaning of some of its particular Doctrines. Now as such Persons as these cannot be supposed to be included under those general Denunciations of God's Wrath which lye against Unbelievers; so they must needs be excepted out of the present Argument. And therefore all that I mean when I say that *believing is possible to all that hear,* is, that none to whom the Gospel is preached are under an Impossibility of receiving it, through the Want of Divine Grace; Or in other Words, That when Men are endued with such natural Abilities, as, if not hinder'd by their Lusts and Appetites, would lead them to the Knowledge of the Truth, they shall not want such a Measure of supernatural Assistance from God, as will be sufficient to remove these Impediments, and consequently, as will enable them to understand and believe as the Gospel directs them.

and

and seeing every Man may, if he pleases, pray to God for that Grace which he stands in need of, it is evident that sufficient Grace, and consequently Obedience, is possible to all that have embraced the Gospel. But can a Man (you will perhaps ask) pray acceptably without the Grace of God? I answer, No; but with it I hope he may; and 'tis certain that God will give to every Man that Grace which is necessary to enable him to pray for farther Grace; for he has commanded every Man to pray for Grace, and he has promised Grace to all those who pray for it; by consequence he must give to every one so much Grace as is necessary to enable him to pray acceptably, unless you can suppose him to be so deceitful and insincere, as to give us Incouragement to hope for any thing upon such Terms as he himself knows it is impossible for us to perform. If a Man that is Dumb should stand in need of his Neighbour's Assistance, and his Neighbour should come and tell him that he would certainly help him, provided he would but speak; would not the Man have Reason to think himself unkindly used, and that his Neighbour instead of meaning him well, came only to jeer and insult him? Just such sort of Dealing, and worse, do they ascribe to God, who when he has commanded us to ask that we may have, do yet suppose that he does not vouchsafe us that Power which is necessary so much as to the very asking.

§. V. BUT indeed, that Obedience is possible to all that believe, may demonstratively be proved, by the same way by which I have already proved that believing is possible to all that hear, viz. from the Consideration of the Divine Justice and Goodness: For the End of Faith is Obedience, and therefore the same Severity of Condemnation belongs to those, who having imbraced the Gospel, do not answer the End of their Calling by a holy Conversation, as to those who remain in a State of Infidelity. The Gospel assures us that *without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. It threatens *Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, to every Soul that doth Evil*, Rom. 2. 8. 9. But what Justice can there be in this if Obedience be a thing impossible? To inflict an eternal Punishment for not performing an impossible Condition, is, as I said before, unjust and cruel, and therefore cannot without the highest Reproach be fastned upon him who has declared himself to be a God of *Righteousness, full of Compassion, plenteous in Goodness and in Mercy*. This will appear yet farther, if we consider that Aggravation of Punishment which is threatned to those, who having embraced the Gospel, do yet continue in their Disobedience. If, says the Apostle, *the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just Recompence of Reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?* Heb. 2. 2, 3. Again Chap. 10. 26, 27, 28, 29. *If we sin wilfully after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation.* And if he that despised Moses's Law died without Mercy, of how much sorer Punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under Foot the Son of God? From these Words, I say, it is evident that the Ministration of the Gospel to those who believe, shall, if they obey it not, only serve to heighten their Condemnation. Now where there is an Aggravation of the Punishment, Justice requires that there be also an Aggravation of the Crime for which that Punishment is inflicted; and the Scriptures plainly suppose that the neglecting those Means of Holiness which the Gospel affords to them that believe, is that Aggravation. But if notwithstanding the Ministration of the Gospel, and the Knowledge of the Truth, Holiness be a thing impossible, then the Ministration of the Gospel will be no Means of Holiness at all, and consequently, a Man will be no more to blame for not being holy if he believes, than if he believes not, nor ever had had the Gospel made known to him. †

Part. II.
P. 105. to
162.

§. VI. IN answer to this, and that which has before been said upon this Subject, it is (as I then observed) commonly alledged, that the Impossibility which we lye under of believing and obeying the Gospel without the Grace of God, was occasioned through our own Fault: For, say they, *Adam* before his Fall, and we in him, had that Power which would have enabled us to have done both. Now *Adam's* Sin, by which that Power was lost, was OUR Sin; therefore 'tis through our own Fault that we are not able to believe and obey; therefore God may deny us his preventing and assisting Grace, and yet justly damn us for not believing and obeying. This is the last Refuge of the " Patrons of absolute personal Decrees, when they are put to it to reconcile " the commanding impossible things under Pain of Damnation, with the Di- " vine Justice: But certainly it is a Pretence so weak, that nothing but a des- " perate Cause can force any Man to shelter himself under it. For 1. It is ab- " surd to say that WE had in *Adam* that Power which would have enabled us " to believe and obey the Gospel; for whilst we were in his Loins, WE nei- " ther had, nor were capable of having any Power at all," and consequently not that Power which is now contended for. " Yes, say they, our Nature had " it in *Adam*." * But what do they mean by this? Why, truly, I do not well know; but all that can in any sound Sense be meant by it, is, that *Adam* had it, which indeed is very true. But if all that Power which our first Parents had, must be esteemed OURS, then all that Power which our immediate Parents had, must by Parity of Reason be also esteemed OURS, and what fine Consequences would follow from hence, it is, I suppose, obvious to any Man's Capacity to understand. 2. Supposing it were Sense to say that WE had in *Adam* that Power which would have enabled us to believe and obey the Gospel, how does it appear that we lost that Power by our own Fault? Why it seems *Adam's* Sin was OUR Sin? How so? Did we consent to the Sin of our first Parents? Or was it in our Power to prevent their sinning? Neither of these can be affirmed, and therefore 'tis plain that THEIR Sin was not properly OUR Sin, for no Man can be justly charged with any thing as a Fault, to the doing whereof he never concurr'd, nor could do any thing to hinder its being committed. That we feel indeed the said Effects of *Adam's* Sin, is too notorious to be denied: But that the Guilt of his Sin is properly chargeable upon us, I can no more believe, than that I am answer- able for all the Sins which my whole Ancestry since *Adam* were guilty of, † whilst I was in their Loins. But to end this Dispute all at once, I say, † 3. That suppose we had in *Adam* a Power to believe and obey the Gospel, and that we lost it by our own Fault, yet even this will not clear the Justice of God in damning us eternally for not believing and obeying, unless he supplys us with new Grace or Strength so to do. " For since the Evangelical Law was " given after the Fall," it is plain unless God supplys us (as I say he does every Man) with new Grace, " the fulfilling of that Law was impossible at that very " time, or rather before it was given." Now this is alone sufficient to make the Penalty annexed to this Law unjust: * For Laws being by all wise and good Lawgivers, intended to regulate the present and future Actions of Men, ought therefore to be measured according to Men's present Abilities, and not according to that Power which they had, or might have had at any time before those Laws were made, or the Will or Intention of the Lawgiver was at all made known concerning them. If a King should make a Law, enjoining a blind Man upon Pain of Death to do something which his Blindness has absolutely unqualified him for, common Sense tells us that such a Law would be unjust and cruel; nor does it signify in the least whether such a Person could once see or not; nor if he could, whether his Blindness was occasioned by some natural Distemper, or he had wilfully put out his own Eyes. You will urge, perhaps, that this Instance is not exactly parallel, because † in the present Case our Disability is only the Punishment of a former Transgression, * and that inflicted by the Lawgiver himself. But this is so far from mending the Matter, that it " rather

rather makes it worse: For if I cannot be justly bound by a Law which I am beforehand made incapable of performing by an immediate Act of my own, much less can I be bound by a Law which I am beforehand incapacitated to fulfil, by the immediate Act of that very Person by whom the Law is imposed. †

“ If a Man’s whole Estate were confiscated for Treason, would it be just to
 “ require him, upon Pain of Death, to make such present Contributions to
 “ the Crown, as the Punishment of his former Fault makes it impossible for
 “ him to pay? or if a seditious Talker were punished with the Loss of his
 “ Tongue, would it be just to make a Law to hang him afterwards, unless he
 “ would make an audible Recantation? Let us not fasten that Injustice upon
 “ the most holy God, which we would abhor in a sinful Man! But farther; it
 “ is still more unjust to prescribe Impossibilities as a Condition of Pardon. For
 “ he that offers Pardon upon some Condition, does plainly pretend that, so far
 “ as the Pardon is offered, he will not impute the first Fault, but deal with the
 “ Offender according to his future Behaviour: But if he requires what he
 “ knows the first Fault has rendered impossible, he still imputes that Fault; and
 “ instead of putting the Offender into a way of being forgiven, makes it impos-
 “ sible for him to be forgiven, which is nothing else but to punish him at the
 “ same time he pretends to remit the Punishment. Now if this impossible
 “ Condition of Forgiveness is required also under a greater Penalty than was
 “ threatened to the first Offence, then the first Offence is so far from being
 “ made pardonable by the Condition, that it is thereby more grievously pu-
 “ nished; so that there is not only no Mercy shown in the Promise of Pardon
 “ upon such Terms, and in these Circumstances, but an unjust, an unreasona-
 “ ble Severity. To apply this therefore to our present Case. It is plain, and
 “ these Men cannot deny it, that the Remission of all past Offences, and
 “ consequently of Original Sin,” is offer’d to all those to whom the Gospel
 “ is preached, upon Condition of Faith and Obedience: “But if by reason of
 “ Original Sin, the Performance of this Condition was impossible from the
 “ very first Moment that it was required, then the Promise of Forgiveness
 “ was deceitfully and unrighteously made, especially since a more grievous
 “ Penalty is incurr’d by failing of the Performance. I grant, indeed, that by
 “ reason of Original Sin, we are utterly disabled for the Performance of the
 “ Condition without new Grace from God;” but I say then that he gives such
 “ Grace to all of us, by which the Performance of the Condition is truly pos-
 “ sible, and upon this Ground he may and doth most righteously require it.
 “ If these Men will still say that he does not, they must, in order to reconcile
 “ their Opinion with the Divine Justice, shew either that Insincerity is not Un-
 “ righteousness, or that God upon that Supposition does not act insincerely;
 “ and let them shew either when they can.”

§. VII. FROM what has been said then it appears “that this Answer taken
 “ from the Transgression of our first Parents, is so far from clearing the Justice
 “ of God” in condemning us everlastingly, for not performing the Conditions
 “ of the Gospel, if those Conditions be impossible; that on the other hand it
 “ throws more foul Reproaches upon the Divine Majesty, than the Doctrine it
 “ self” would otherwise do.* But whatever may be said to excuse the Justice
 “ of God in dealing thus with Mankind, I am sure nothing can be offered in
 “ Defence of his Goodness or Mercy. For the proper Notion of Mercy consists
 “ in remitting something, which by the strictest and severest Rigor of the Law,
 “ might justly be required. Wherefore, though it should be granted, that upon
 “ the Account of Transgressions formerly committed, God justly might prescribe
 “ impossible Conditions to us, and then damn us eternally for not performing
 “ them; yet seeing this is doing the most that can in Justice be done, ’tis evi-
 “ dent that should he do it, there would not be the least Shadow or Appearance
 “ of Mercy. But God has declared himself to be merciful to all, as well as just
 “ to all; nay, his Mercy is that in the Glory whereof he is most principally de-
 “ lighted.

lighted. Wherefore I conclude, that the Performance of the Conditions of the Gospel is not only possible to all, but in some Degree easy to all who understand what those Conditions are, and so much the rather because our blessed Saviour has used it as a Motive to induce those that *labour and are heavy laden to come unto him, that his Yoke is easy, and his Burthen is light*, Matt. 11. 28, 30.

§. VIII. AND thus I have shown from the Consideration of the Justice and Goodness of God, that the Performance of the Conditions of the Gospel are possible to all to whom they are made known. But there are besides these some other Arguments to be drawn from God's Wisdom and Veracity, which for the farther Confirmation of this Matter, I shall briefly mention.† As to the former, *viz.* God's Wisdom, we know that the Laws of the Gospel are equally imposed upon all to whom they are revealed. These Laws are enforced with serious Exhortations to Obedience, with Promises on the one hand, and with Threatnings on the other. Now setting aside the Injustice of God in executing these Threatnings upon the Disobedient, I say, that the bare imposing of such Laws, if it is not possible to perform them, is contrary to his Wisdom. For the only wise and reasonable End of imposing Laws, is, that they may be obeyed; by consequence, it is a vain and foolish thing for any one to pretend to impose Laws, where he knows before-hand that Obedience will always be impossible. The Folly is still greater, if these Laws be enforced with Promises and Threatnings; for the End of these is to move and persuade Men to the Performance of that which the Law commands, by working upon their Hopes and Fears. But how foolish a thing is it to apply such Motives as these, when that which the Law commands is impossible to be performed? Lastly, to use earnest and passionate Exhortations in such a Case as this, is not only foolish, but "Hypocritical and insincere; for these carry with them an Appearance of a serious and charitable Intention, together with some Hope of prevailing. " But none of this can be implied in any ones exhorting another to do that which he knows before-hand is not possible to be done." The Laws of the Gospel therefore being equally imposed upon all to whom they are made known, and being thus back'd with Exhortations, Promises, and Threatnings; all this, I say, manifestly implies, that to all such the Performance of these Laws is a thing possible; and that it is really so, we cannot deny, without calling in Question the Veracity of God. For he hath told us, that he *hath no Pleasure in the Death of him that dieth, but had rather that he should turn and live*, Ezech. 18. 32. Chap. 33. 11. "But what Shadow of Truth can there be in that Saying, if he first prescribes impossible Terms of Forgiveness, and then damns the Sinner with more Severity for not performing them?" * Again, the Scriptures assure us that *Jesus Christ gave himself a Ransom for ALL*, 1 Tim. 2. 6. that *he is the Propitiation for the Sins of the WHOLE WORLD*, 1 Joh. 2. 2. But how did *Jesus Christ* give himself a Ransom for all, if all may not reap the Benefit of his Redemption? And how can all reap the Benefit of his Redemption, if the Conditions of that Salvation which he has purchased be impossible, even to those from whom the Performance of them will certainly be required? We are told, I know, by the Assertors of absolute particular Decrees, that these general Terms ought to be understood in a limited Signification. But besides that such a Limitation is merely arbitrary, † that one Place of St. Paul, Rom. 5. 18. is alone sufficient to evince the contrary. As, says he, *by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even so by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men to Justification*. By which Words, and by the whole of the Apostle's Discourse from ver. 15. to 20. it is evident that the Benefit of Christ's Redemption extends it self as far as the Loss sustained by the Fall of Adam. Now 'tis plain, and these Men grant, that the Loss sustained by Adam's Fall was universal; by consequence the Benefit of the Redemption wrought by *Jesus Christ* must be universal likewise.

* §. IX.

* §. IX. It is evident then that there are none to whom the Conditions of the Gospel are made known, who may not, if they will, perform those Conditions. For if there were, the Benefit of Christ's Redemption would be less extensive than the Loss sustained by *Adam's Fall*; God would not deal sincerely by us, when he tells us that *he hath no Pleasure in the Death of a Sinner*; He would not act wisely, in imposing Laws universally upon all, and backing them with Exhortations, Promises, and Threatnings; nor justly, in executing those Threatnings upon all who fail in their Obedience. I thought it necessary to prove this Point distinctly, and *a priori*, because by turning the Argument backward we may fully establish the Truth of that which I have above asserted, and from whence this Point was at first concluded by way of Inference, *viz.* That all Believers are under a Possibility of performing that Condition upon which necessary special Grace is promised, and consequently of obtaining that Grace. For as on the one hand the Possibility of obtaining all necessary Grace supposes the Possibility of Obedience, so on the other hand the Possibility of Obedience does plainly suppose the Possibility of obtaining all necessary Grace. So that these two different Ways of arguing bring us at last to one and the same End; only by being thus brought mutually to give Light to and support one another, they will infer the Conclusion with greater Strength and Clearness. The Conclusion I mean is, that Salvation is possible to all that believe. Now since I have before proved that believing is also possible to all to whom the Gospel is preached, we may infer yet farther, that if any such Persons fail of Salvation, it is owing to themselves, and consequently that the Doctrine of absolute Reprobation is contrary to the Scriptures.

§. X. AND thus much for the first Inference drawn from the Premises above laid down, *viz.* That Obedience is possible to all that believe. The other is, That it is likewise possible for all Believers to improve in Knowledge and in Goodness, and to go on every Day more and more towards Perfection. For, that we may have that Grace which will make it possible for us thus to improve, nothing more is required (besides praying for it) than that we make a good Use of that Grace which we already have. Now this it is certainly possible for every Man to do; for he makes a good Use of the Grace of God, who makes the best Use of it he is able; and to say that a Man cannot do this, is to say that a Man cannot do that which he can do, which is a Contradiction. He therefore that is already wise and good, may by his Prayers and earnest Endeavours grow wiser and better; not that it is possible for us to attain to every Kind or Degree of Improvement which we may possibly desire to attain unto; for there are several Sorts and Degrees of Improvement which God never did nor ever will vouchsafe to any Man; others, which though he has sometime bestowed, yet it has been only to a few Persons upon some special Occasions. Wherefore this Rule, *To him that hath shall be given*, must not be taken universally, but limited to such Improvements as our imperfect State and Condition in this Life will admit of, and are consistent with the known and ordinary Methods of God's Providence. † Nay, it will admit of a farther Limitation yet. For even of those Improvements which are common and ordinary, *i. e.* which Men do ordinarily attain unto, every Person cannot infer from this general Rule, nor from that other in *Luke 11.* where the Spirit is promised *to them that ask it*, that all or any one of them in particular shall upon his asking be bestowed upon him. The reason of this has been assigned (*c*) elsewhere, *viz.* that these Improvements fall under the Notion of Qualifications only profitable, and that the Motive upon which God is pleased to favour us with these profitable Qualifications, is his Fatherly Affection and Goodness. Now 'tis plain that it can be no Objection against God's Goodness, if he does not grant me every parti-

† Part I.
P. 83, to
88.

(c) See Chap. 1. §. 6.

cular Improvement which I may ask him for. "For, 1. He may grant me a-
 "nother thing in the stead of it which is more profitable, and then he is not
 "the less but the more good for so doing. Thus I may pray for Knowledge
 "in some Point of Religion which I desire to be satisfied in, while in the mean
 "time I may lie under a greater Necessity than I am sensible of, of Grace to
 "improve that Knowledge which God hath already blessed me with, to those
 "Degrees of Goodness which may be attained thereby. 2. God may grant
 "me all those Improvements which are suitable to that Place and Condition
 "which he hath appointed me in this World, and then I ought not to question
 "his Paternal Goodness, if he denies my Request of some particular Improve-
 "ment, which is more suitable to another's Condition than my own. Thus
 "if I that am but a private Christian labour to know as much as my Spiritual
 "Guide, and, praying for God's Blessing upon my Endeavours, do yet fail of
 "my Desire, I am not to conclude that God is wanting in his Kindness to me,
 "if he grants me that Measure of profitable Knowledge which is suitable to my
 "State, Education, and Calling. 3. It is consistent with the Goodness of God
 "in dispensing his Grace for Improvements, to make use of his Sovereign Au-
 "* "thority, and give to one more than to another *," for no other Reason
 "than because it pleaseth him. In Acts of strict Justice God is indeed obliged
 "to deal by all equally, but in Acts of meer Goodness he is not so; and there-
 "fore God is still good to me if he gives me what is profitable to my Needs, nor
 "† ought I to complain because he gives to another more. † For these Reasons, I
 "say, every Christian cannot promise himself every particular Kind or Degree of
 "Improvement which he sees another Man favoured withal, but only such Im-
 "provement in general as God sees to be most fitting and convenient for him;
 "and that which ought abundantly to satisfy us in this Case is, that God knows
 "what is fittest for us, much better than we do our selves. "Yet we are to re-
 "member that a great difference is to be put between Improvements in Good-
 "ness on the one hand, and in Knowledge on the other. For the former do
 "of themselves recommend us to the Favour of God, the latter no otherwise
 "than as they are accompanied with an upright Care to do the Will of God
 "more perfectly. Therefore if a sincere Christian prays for any Degree of Ho-
 "liness, which his imperfect Condition in this World will admit of, though
 "he cannot conclude that God will grant it him barely because he asks it, and
 "it is profitable for him (for so is every Degree of Knowledge) yet he has
 "this reason to conclude thus, which is not common to praying for Improve-
 "ments in Knowledge, viz. that he prays for something which God loves for
 "it self, and which he will be the more pleased with him for if he obtains it.
 "That Delight which God takes in the Persons of Men is not founded upon
 "the mere Improvements of their Understandings, but upon the Sincerity of
 "their Obedience; whence we may conclude, that the more we grow in
 "Grace and Virtue, the more God loveth us; and therefore that he will in-
 "crease all Christian Virtues in us to such Degrees towards Perfection, as
 "are some way proportionable to our Prayers and Endeavours in following
 "after Righteousness.

CHAP. VII.

Concerning the MANNER and MEASURE of the Spirit's Operations.

§. I. **W**E are now come to the fourth and last general Question, *viz.* What is the *Manner* and *Measure* of the Spirit's Operations. Part I.
P. 270,
271.

Concerning which I observe that the Scriptures are very silent, in comparison to that clear and full Account which they have given us of the former; God having thought it sufficient for our Encouragement in the Search of Truth and the Study of Vertue and Godliness, to let us know that he will give his holy Spirit to them that ask him for necessary and profitable Purposes, without satisfying our Curiosity about the Manner of his Operations and the Measure of their Power. Wherefore in handling this Subject a Man should not venture to affirm many things, or to conclude very particularly, much less to obtrude his Opinions upon other Men. For in Matters that are to be known only by Revelation, and concerning which there is but little revealed, he that is most ready to affirm boldly and particularly, is most likely to be mistaken, and that, if there were no other reason for it, because it argues an immodest Temper to define peremptorily in Things which God hath reserved from our Knowledge; and this we may be very certain is none of those Qualifications which he hath promised to reward with the Discovery of the Truth.

§. II. BUT though the Silence of the Scriptures as to this Matter will not allow us to determine very particularly concerning it, yet we may venture to lay down a few Propositions, from whence we may in general conclude after what Manner and with what Power the Spirit operates upon the Souls of Men. The first of them is, "That such is the Manner of the Spirit's Operations, that Faith, Obedience, together with Improvement in Holiness, are nevertheless the proper and genuine Effects of the Revelation of the Gospel." This Proposition is evident from hence, *viz.* that the Scriptures do affirm the Revelation of the Gospel to be properly the Cause of all these Qualifications. "As to Faith, St. Paul tells us that it comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, Rom. 10. 17. And hence he tells the *Corinthians*, that in Jesus Christ he had gotten them through the Gospel, *i. e.* that by the preaching of the Gospel he had first brought them over to the Faith of Christ, 1 Cor. 4. 15. Furthermore our Obedience is by the same Apostle ascribed to the Power of God's Word, 1 Thess. 2. 13. where the Word of God is said to work effectually in them that believe. And by St. Peter, 1 Pet. 1. 23. where we are said to be born again, not of corruptible Seed, but of incorruptible, even by the Word of God, which endureth for ever. Lastly, our Spiritual Improvement is not long after ascribed to the same Cause, 1 Pet. 2. 2. where the Apostle exhorts Believers, that as new born Babes they would desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that they might grow thereby." From these Places I say it is manifest that Faith, Obedience, and all Improvements in Holiness, are the proper Effects of the Revelation of the Gospel, and consequently that the Manner of the Spirit's Operations must not be so defined, but that these Qualifications may also consistently be ascribed to the Force and Power of the Word of God upon our Minds.

§. III. My second Assertion is, "That the manner of the Spirit's Operations is suitable to the Nature of Mankind;" which is a Truth so fully and so liberally granted by all Parties, that nothing needs to be said to prove it. Now Man we know is an intelligent and rational Being, able to discern between

Good and Evil, he has also such a Freedom or Liberty of Will as makes him accountable to God for his Behaviour in this Life; by consequence the Spirit must not be supposed to operate in such a Manner, as not to make the least Use of the Understanding, nor must it be so far inconsistent with Freedom and Liberty, as that a Man's Actions may not properly be called his own.

P. 292, to
293.

§. IV. THIRDLY, Such is the Manner of the Spirit's Operations, "that they
" do not make our own Care and Diligence after Vertue and Godliness unne-
" cessary, but that on the other hand the Operations of the Spirit will do us
* " no good if our own Endeavours be wanting." * This Proposition naturally
flows from the former; for if the Spirit wrought upon us so as to make our
own Endeavours unnecessary, he would not then work upon us in a Manner
† suitable to rational and accountable Creatures. † But it is farther evident from
those Places of Scripture "where we are commanded, exhorted, intreated, and
" that most seriously, affectionately and frequently, to repent and be converted,
" and all this with Promises of an Eternal Reward if we do, and with Threat-
" nings of Everlasting Punishment if we do not." Now to say after this, that
the Spirit works upon us in such a Manner, as that our own Endeavours are not at
all necessary, "is to say, that though God requires us to be active and diligent, it may
" be never the worse for us, though we be lazy! It is to turn all those Commands,
" Exhortations, &c. into a solemn Piece of Pageantry!" For what can be more
vain than to require Men "under the most dreadful Penalties, and with the most
" alluring Promises, to obtain those Qualifications, which will be thrust upon
" them, whether they do any thing themselves to obtain them or not? Where-
" fore I conclude, that the Holy Spirit worketh no otherwise in the Minds of
" Men, than to leave them under as great an Obligation to be diligent in the
" Use of all proper Means for their Recovery and Perseverance, as if they had
" not the Benefit of any such Divine Operation, but were left (if it had been
" possible for them) to do all for themselves.

P. 298, to
302.

§. V. FOURTHLY, "The Operations of the Holy Spirit upon the Minds of
" Men, are suited and proportioned to their present spiritual Estate. He does
" not produce these Effects in us all at once, which the Scripture ascribes to
" Divine Grace, but in such an Order, and by those Degrees, that suit with
" our Capacities and Qualification. This is evident from hence, *viz.* That we
" are in Scripture exhorted to *grow in Grace*, to *abound in the Work of the Lord*,
" and to *go on to Perfection*; which Places, and the like, do strongly imply
" that we cannot on a sudden arrive to any Degree of Goodness, which we
" fall greatly short of at present, much less that we can be presently *filled with*
" *the Fulness of God*: For if we could, then we might become *Men in Christ*
" as soon as we are *Babes*, and come to the *Fulness of our Stature*, without
" *growing and going on to Perfection*." Besides, seeing I have before shown that
all Vertues and Graces, are as well the proper Effects of God's Word, as they
are of the Spirit's Operations, it clearly follows that the Spirit works these
Graces in us by such Degrees, as are proportionable to that Care and Diligence,
wherein the Word of God is considered by us. Lastly, Since Experience shews
" that Customs are not easily, and presently put off; that Matters of Difficulty
" cannot be made familiar to us but by Use and Practice; and particularly, that
" *they who are accustomed to do Evil*, cannot of a sudden *learn to do Well*; I
" say, this being considered, we must needs acknowledge that the Holy Spirit
" does not produce the Effects of his Grace in the Minds of Men all at once,
" but that he accommodates his Operations to the State in which they are at
" present, prompting them to that Amendment which the Measure of their
" Capacity will admit of.

P. 305, to
307.

§. VI. FIFTHLY, And to conclude; "the Holy Spirit moves upon the Minds
" of Men in a most familiar way, so that his Motions are not discernable by
" us

“ us, from the natural Operations of our Minds. We feel them no other-
 “ wise than we do our Thoughts and Meditations; we cannot distinguish them
 “ by the manner of their affecting us, from our natural Reasonings, and the
 “ Operations of Truth upon our Souls; so that if God had only designed to
 “ give the Holy Spirit to us, without making any mention of it in his Word,
 “ we could never have known, unless it had been communicated to us by some
 “ private Revelation, that our Souls are moved by a Divine Power, when we
 “ *love God, and keep his Commandments.* This Imperceptibleness of the Im-
 “ pressions made upon our Souls by the Divine Spirit, was that which our
 “ Saviour signified to *Nicodemus*, by the Similitude of the WIND, *which bloweth*
 “ *where it listeth, and we hear the Sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it com-*
 “ *eth, nor whither it goeth,*” Joh. 3. 8. Nor is it any Argument against the
 Reality of the Spirit's Operations: For the Holy Spirit being intimate to our
 Souls, may affect us when we are not sensible of it; and it is evident that
 there are many natural Effects wrought upon our Minds, the Causes whereof
 we do not perceive, nor can distinguish in our selves. * But that which is most
 material to be observed in this Place is, that it is this Imperceptibleness of the
 Spirit's Impressions, or Operations, which essentially distinguishes them from
 that Operation which we term (d) inward immediate Revelation. For in
 every such Revelation, the Impressions made by the Spirit, must by their
 peculiar way and manner of affecting us, be clearly and evidently distin-
 guishable from the natural Operations of our Mind. Revelation is the Voice
 or Speech of God to Man, and the Design of it is to make known or de-
 clare something to the Person inspired, which he is to receive as from
 God. But how is it possible that any thing should be the Means of convey-
 ing to me the Divine Will in any particular, which for ought I can tell, may
 be no more than a natural Suggestion of my own Mind? If God should sug-
 gest any thing to me after this imperceptible and indistinguishable manner,
 I should indeed be more knowing; but I could no more receive such a Sug-
 gestion as from God, than I could receive any Law or Declaration as
 from the King, merely by hearing his Voice, which yet I could not di-
 stinguish from the Voice of any other Man. It is evident then, that whenever
 God reveals himself inwardly to any Person, something there must be in the
 manner of the Spirit's Operations, by which they may infallibly be known and
 distinguished from every thing else. On the other hand, where the Opera-
 tions of the Spirit are thus distinguishable, there is certainly a Divine imme-
 diate Revelation. For to make a Divine immediate Revelation, nothing more
 is required, than that it be something whereby the Will of God is immedi-
 ately conveyed. Wherefore, if a Man feels such Motions or Suggestions with-
 in himself, as he can infallibly distinguish from the Operations of his Mind,
 and know them to be from the Spirit, such a Person has thereby the Will of
 God immediately conveyed to him, and consequently he enjoys an immediate
 Divine Revelation. This then is a good Argument to prove the Truth of the
 Proposition above laid down. For if, though Christians in an ordinary way
 are assisted by the Spirit of God, they do not ordinarily enjoy the Benefit of
 immediate Revelation, as has been proved; and if Christians must nevertheless
 ordinarily have the Benefit of immediate Revelation, upon Supposition that the
 ordinary Operations of the Spirit are distinguishable; if all this, I say, be true,
 it clearly follows, that the Operations of the Spirit in an ordinary way are not
 distinguishable. But indeed every Man may convince himself of this by his own
 Experience. Let any one seriously and impartially look into his Heart, and see
 what passes there; he will find, perhaps, a sincere and affectionate Love of
 God, strong and vehement Inclinations towards Holiness, great Transports of

(d) By an *inward* Revelation, I mean, such a Revelation as is not conveyed to us by any *outward Medium* which affects our Senses.

Devotion, joined with impatient Expectations of the Glories which shall hereafter be revealed. These, I say, and if there be any other good Dispositions, he may find in himself. But then from what secret Spring these Divine Graces issue forth; or by what Power this heavenly Frame hath been wrought in him, this he cannot sensibly perceive, nor is it possible that he should understand, but from the Word of God, which tells us that all good Dispositions whatsoever, are the Effects of the Spirit's Operations. I know very well that our Pretenders to immediate Revelation do talk very much of their inward Feelings; by which, if they mean that they feel good Dispositions, or any unusual or vehement Commotions of Mind, it may be very true; but if they mean that they can by any infallible Characters attending these Commotions, know them to be from the Spirit, I do not think my self bound to, nor † shall I believe it, barely because they are pleased to say so.†

§. VII. THE Sum of the whole is this; "That the Spirit works his Graces
" in us in such a manner, as that they are the genuine Effects of God's
" Word, of the natural Use of our Faculties, viz. our Understanding and
" Will, and of our own Care and Diligence in using the external Means
" of Grace which God has afforded us. His Operations in us, make us ca-
" pable of recovering our selves from a sinful State by Degrees, and yet all
" the while there is no sensible Difference between them and the natural O-
" perations of our Minds. To affirm more particularly what is the manner
" of the Spirit's Operations, I dare not, unless I had Warrant (which I
" think I have not) from the Scriptures so to do. And if this be all that
" the Scripture lets us know concerning this Matter, we have good Reason
" to conclude that no more is needful to be known by us.

CHAP. VIII.

*A Conclusion drawn from the Premises, viz. That the Spirit does
not operate irresistibly.*

* §. I. * **F**ROM what has been thus advanced in general concerning the Manner and Measure of the Spirit's Operations, the Doctrine of the IRRESISTIBILITY of the Divine Grace may, I think, very easily be refuted. Of which that the Reader may be enabled to judge, it will be necessary that the State of the Controversy be clearly and distinctly laid before him. The Question therefore is this, (e) "Whether supposing all the Operations of
" Grace, which God makes use of in order to Conversion, Conversion be
" still so far in the Power of Man, as that he may be either converted or
" not converted?" The Patrons of absolute Personal Decrees maintain the Negative; for they tell us that the Spirit of God operates upon the Soul by an immediate (f) Almighty Power, that this immediate Almighty Act of the Spirit is the immediate proper Cause of Conversion, and that therefore this immediate Almighty Act of the Spirit being once supposed, it is no more in a Man's Power to hinder his own Conversion, than he was able at first to hinder his own Creation. And this they say is always the Case, wherever it be that Conversion is wrought. For they do not suppose (nor

(e) Quæstio eo redit — an positis omnibus gratiæ operationibus, quibus ad conversionem in nobis efficiendam Deus utitur; maneat tamen ipsa conversio ita in potestate hominis, ut possit — se convertere vel non convertere. Quod — negamus. *Turretin. Institut. Loc. 15. Quæst. 6. § 7.*

(f) Actio Dei in conversione hominis — constat — virtute omnipotenti & invicta, quæ non minor est ipsa creatione & resurrectione hominis. *Id. Ibid. Quæst. 4. § 6.* Ut ergo, creanti, generanti, suscitanti, nemo resistere potest; Ita nec Deo hominem convertenti. *Ibid. Quæst. 6. § 9.*

will their Principles suffer them to suppose) that the saving Grace of God, which works irresistibly in some, may be resisted in others. No, according to them (g) Grace cannot be sufficient, unless it be also efficacious, *i. e.* unless it operates irresistibly; so that the Doctrine of these Men is plainly this, † “That Conversion is the Effect of such an Operation of the Spirit upon the Mind, P. 270. as makes it impossible for a Man not to be converted; and withal that Conversion is impossible without such an irresistible Operation.” * Now as to the latter part of this Doctrine, I have, I think, already confuted it, Chap. 6. in treating of the Persons to whom the Spirit is promised and given. For if (as Experience shews) all Men are not converted. If nevertheless (as has there been proved) God gives to all Men sufficient Grace for Conversion. The Consequence is plain and undeniable, that Conversion is possible without an irresistible Operation. For the having Grace sufficient for Conversion, supposes Conversion to be possible; and the not being converted by that Grace, shews it not to be irresistible. But as we cannot be too cautious in guarding against Errors of so evil a Tendency as this, so it is certain that this Doctrine can no way so effectually be exposed as by considering both Parts of it together. This therefore is what I now purpose to do; and in order hereto I shall first shew the Contradiction it bears to several of those general Propositions concerning the Manner of the Spirit's Operations, which have been laid down in the foregoing Chapter. Secondly, I shall apply some Arguments of another Kind, by which the Falshood of it will be more fully evinced. Thirdly, I shall shew the Weakness and Insufficiency of those Arguments, by which this Doctrine is endeavoured to be supported.

§. II. But before I enter upon these Matters, it will not be amiss for the fuller opening of the State of the Controversy, to acquaint my Reader how these Divines explain the Nature of Conversion. Now Conversion they tell us is twofold, *viz.* (h) *habitual* and *actual*. *Habitual* Conversion is the having *supernatural Habits* infused into the Soul by the Spirit of God. *Actual* Conversion consists in the *Exercise* of those *Habits*. What they mean by those supernatural Habits, in the Infusion whereof, as they say, habitual Conversion does consist, it is not at first Sight so easy to understand. For sometimes they speak of this habitual Conversion in such a manner as would induce an unattentive Reader to believe that by it they did not mean Conversion it self, but only the (i) *Power* of Conversion. But this cannot possibly be the Case. For, 1. If the Spirit gives only the Power of Conversion, then Conversion will not be the Effect of an irresistible Operation, as they say it is. 2. They (k) expressly teach that the Spirit infuses not only the Power of Conversion, but Conversion it self. 3. They explain this habitual Conversion by (l) *Regeneration*, or the *new Birth*, by which, say they, a Man is *renewed after the Image of his Creator*, *i. e.* his Prejudices are removed, his corrupt Inclinations reformed, and the Soul receives a quite different Frame and Disposition from what it had before. Now this it must be owned is a very good Notion of Conversion;

(g) Ad conversionem nullam gratiam sufficientem agnoscimus, quæ pariter non sit efficax. *Ib.* Quæst. 3: § 4:

(h) Conversio sub duplici vires spectari potest, vel ut habitualis, vel ut actualis — fit per habituum supernaturalium infusionem a Spiritu Sancto. Actualis, per bonorum habituum exercitium. *Id.* *Ibid.* Quæst. 4: § 13.

(i) Habitualis conversio consistit in principiis agendi, quæ Deus indit facultatibus hominis corrupti, quæ sunt qualitates supernaturales seu habitus & dispositiones a quibus resultat potentia activa sese convertendi. *Ibid.*

(k) Quod si vires quasdam infundendæ daret Deus tantum posse credere, posse convertere, ac ipsum interim actum committeret libero hominum arbitrio; certè quod primus Parens fecit, faceremus omnes. *Theologi Britan.* in Act. Synod. Dordrac. Par. 2. p. 171.

(l) Illa (sc. conversio habitualis) melius *regeneratio* dicitur, quia se habet ad modum novæ nativitatis, qua homo reformatur ad imaginem Creatoris sui. *Turretin.* *Ibid.* And a little after, Hic ergo primus est gradus Gratiæ efficax, quo Deus animos electorum intima quadam & mirabili operatione regenerat, & veluti de novo creat, infundendo Spiritum vivificum, qui in intima Animæ penetralia illabendo, refingit Animum ipsum, viciosas ejus inclinationes & præjudicia sanando. See also Act. Synod. Dordrac. Par. 2. p. 169. from whence this Passage is taken almost verbatim.

for it implies under it an entire Change of the Mind from Evil to Good. But why after this these Men should talk of another sort of Conversion, unless it were to save themselves from some Difficulties, I cannot perceive. For if by the Exercise of these supernatural Habits, they mean the outward Acts of Holiness, these are not properly Conversion, but the natural Effects or Consequents of Conversion. If they mean the inward Acts of the Mind, these are no other than that very Change which has already been described, and consequently habitual Conversion and actual Conversion will be one and the same thing. And this indeed appears to be truly the Case. For they say that the actual Conversion is *not to be distinguished from the habitual (m) in the Order of Time, but only in the Order of Nature and Causality*. But this is not true of the external Acts of Holiness (for these it is plain must be distinguished from every thing that is internal in the Order of Time, as well as in the Order of Nature) and therefore these external Acts cannot be the Exercise of those supernatural Habits, in which actual Conversion is by them supposed to consist. Furthermore they expressly describe this actual Conversion by the Exercise of the (n) *internal Acts of the Mind, such as Faith, Repentance, Love, and the like; so that in order to make this actual Conversion something distinct from the habitual, these Men must affirm that, in the Idea of the thing, a Man may be renewed after the Image of his Creator, that his Prejudices may be removed, and his corrupt Inclinations reformed, without any one internal Act of Holiness. These are Metaphysics, I confess, as far above the reach of my Capacity, as they are removed from the Plainness and Simplicity of the Gospel. For does not a Renovation of the Mind necessarily imply, in the very Notion of it, a Renovation of its internal Acts or Operations? Is not this Renovation the very thing we mean, when we say that the Mind is changed? Surely it is, and these Men with all their Subtilty cannot, I perceive, make any thing else of it. For when they come to explain this Distinction of habitual Conversion from actual, they do it in such a manner as evidently shews that they can perceive no real difference between them. Hear how Mr. Turretin attempts the Matter. (o) *A thing, says he, must first be, before it can operate; and as the Mind cannot put forth the Acts of understanding and willing simply, unless it be endued with the natural Power of understanding and willing, so neither can it will or understand well, (i. e. as it ought,) unless it be first renewed by supernatural Habits.* Who sees not here that the Author by this Comparison makes the Notion of habitual Conversion directly to contradict the whole Tenor of that (which he elsewhere advances? For that which in the Comparison answers to supernatural Habits, is the natural Power of understanding and willing; consequently, according to this Comparison, the Infusion of supernatural Habits (i. e. habitual Conversion) must be no more than giving supernaturally the Power of willing and understanding well. But these Divines teach, and the whole Scope and Tenor of their Doctrine requires them to maintain, that the Infusion of these supernatural Habits implies a great deal more than the Power of willing and understanding well; and what can this be but the very Acts themselves, which yet our Author says is not habitual, but actual Conversion? Not more successful is he in the Comparison which follows immediately after. *An evil Tree cannot bring forth good Fruit, unless of an evil Tree it first be made a good one.* Very true; and this Comparison shews aptly enough, that if the*

(m) Licet vero ordine Temporis vix distingui possint in adultis, — ordine tamen Naturæ & Causalitatis, præcedere debet habitualis (conversio) actualem. *Ibid.*

(n) Actualis (conversio) fit per bonorum habituum exercitium, quo actus Fidei & Pœnitentiæ & dantur a Deo & ab homine eliciuntur. *Ibid.* Actualis (conversionis) respectu, causa quidem principalis est Deus, sed proxima & immediata est homo, qui a Spiritu Sancto excitatus, & Fidei & Charitatis habitibus imbutus, credit & amat. §. 15.

(o) Prius res esse debet quam operetur, & ut Anima non potest elicere actus intelligendi & volendi, nisi potentiis naturalibus intellectus & voluntatis instructa, in genere entis: Ita non potest bene intelligere & velle in genere moris, nisi per dispositiones & habitus supernaturales renovata sit. Arbor mala non potest bonos fructus ferre, nisi ex mala bona prius facta sit. *Ibid.* §. 13.

Mind be bad, the outward Behaviour cannot be good. But it does not explain how the Mind may be conceived to be good, antecedently to all internal Acts of Goodness; for these internal Acts of Goodness answer in the Comparison to the Goodness of a Tree, or they answer to nothing. Such lame Work as this is reason good enough to convince me, that this Author himself knew not how clearly to make out his Distinction between habitual and actual Conversion. But it is not worth while to contend any longer about this Matter; for allowing the Distinction to be good, it will make no manner of Alteration in the State of the present Controversy. The main Question comes to this, Whether God, *i. e.* the immediate Act or Operation of the Spirit, be the sole Cause of Conversion. And this must be resolved in the Affirmative, even allowing habitual and actual Conversion, as explained by these Divines, to be two distinct things, if, 1st, God be the sole Cause of habitual Conversion, and if, 2^{dly}, actual Conversion necessarily follow it. For he who is the sole Cause of any thing, is likewise the sole Cause of all those which necessarily flow from it. Now that God is the sole Cause of habitual Conversion, these Men not only grant, but (*p*) earnestly contend; and with great reason, if it be true that it is the Effect of an Almighty Act of the Spirit, for this must needs exclude all Co-operation on the Part of Man. And that, habitual Conversion being once supposed, the actual must necessarily follow, is also evident. For if, as they say, actual Conversion is not distinguishable from habitual in the Order of Time, but only in the Order of Nature and Causality, the reason must be, because how distinguishable soever they may be from each other in the Idea, yet in Fact they cannot be separated the one from the other. And this is what this Author expressly teaches, when he says that (*q*) *the Act of God converting Man, is never without the Act of Man converting himself.* For by the Act of God converting Man, he means the Infusion of supernatural Habits, *i. e.* habitual Conversion, which is the Work of God only. And by the Act of Man converting himself he means actual Conversion, in which, as he pretends, Man concurs or co-operates with God. And this is the Bottom of the whole Contrivance, even by the help of this subtil Distinction, to make Conversion to be an Act of Man, at the same time that it is made to be the Effect of an almighty, irresistible Act of God. But 'tis Labour in vain. For if habitual Conversion be the Act of God only; if where habitual Conversion is, the actual must always necessarily be, 'tis plain that this leaves no room for any Act of Man to intervene, and consequently that God is the sole Cause of the one as well as of the other. This is so clear a Case, that this Author himself, even in the very Heat of his Opposition, could not forbear to acknowledge it. For though he tells us roundly that (*r*) *God is only the PRINCIPAL Cause of ACTUAL Conversion*, by which one would reasonably imagine that he allows Man to be a partial Cause, yet he gives us very plainly to understand that he intends no such thing. For he says, as it were in the very same Breath, that not only the Habit, but the (*s*) *Act of Conversion is caused of God.* So that when this Author says that Man is the *next and immediate Cause* of actual Conversion, he cannot, without a manifest Self-contradiction, mean that he is the efficient Cause: For upon these Principles 'tis plain that Man in this, as well as in habitual Conversion, is (as he expresses it) *merum subjectum recipiens actionem Dei*, only a Subject receiving the Action of God, *i. e.* he does not act, but is acted upon. 'Tis true this Author

(*p*) Conversionis habitualis Deus est sola causa, qui eam vi Spiritus vorticordia efficit sine ulla hominis co-operatione, qui hic — se habet tantum passive, & subjective, quatenus est merum subjectum recipiens actionem Dei. *Id. Ibid. §. 15.*

(*q*) Actio Dei convertentis hominem, nunquam est sine actione hominis, se convertentis ad Deum. *Ibid. §. 13.*

(*r*) Actualis (conversionis) respectu causa quidem principalis est Deus; sed proxima & immediata est homo. *Ibid. §. 15.*

(*s*) Actus credendi a Deo producitur. *Ibid. And a little before in §. 14.* Conversionem habitualement sequitur actualis — Deo ex ipsa sanata & mutata voluntate actum ipsum credendi & convertendi proliciente.

tells us that in actual Conversion Man (t) acts under the Notion of an efficient Cause. But these are only Words; for the Reason he alledges for this evidently shews that he does no such thing. This Reason is, *quia credit actu*, because he actually believes, or is actually converted, which is just as if I should say, that because a Stone actually moves, it is therefore the efficient Cause of its own Motion. But the following Words make all things clear: *Man*, says he, *is in such a sort the Cause of his own Conversion, that he is not so of himself, but from Grace.* First, because the Power of believing comes from God alone, and then because the very Act of believing depends upon God exciting this Faculty or Power to operate; so that nothing can be concluded from hence on the side of Free-will. I am verily of this Author's Opinion, that nothing can from hence be concluded on the side of Free-Will, but a great deal against it. But let him not then any longer pretend that Man is in any Sense the efficient Cause of his own Conversion. For his Design here was plainly to shew that habitual Conversion being once supposed, it is not in a Man's Power to hinder the actual. But what sort of efficient Cause must that be which cannot produce the Effect without the Concurrence of another Cause, which when once it operates, the Effect must necessarily and unavoidably follow? I shall conclude this Paragraph with setting down two Examples, by which this Author has illustrated the whole Matter we have been discoursing upon. Having said that not only the Power, but the very Act of believing, is from God, he proceeds. (u) Thus in restoring the blind Man to Sight, Christ did two things: first he opened his Eyes, and so gave him the Power or Faculty of Seeing; and then (secondly) he caused him in the same Moment to see. So in the raising of Lazarus from the Dead, first he restored his Soul to his Body, and then (in the next place) he brought forth vital Actions. Even so God by an omnipotent Act produces in the Man, i. e. in the Will, new Qualities, and then excites those Faculties to Action. Observe here, 1. how ridiculously this Author in both Examples divides that, which was but a single Act of Christ, into two distinct ones. For in restoring the blind Man to Sight Christ did, he could do, no more than give him the Faculty of Seeing, because this being supposed, the Act of Seeing must (unless a Man wilfully shuts his Eyes) necessarily follow. And in raising Lazarus from the Dead, he did, he could not do any thing more than restore his Soul again to his Body, because this being also supposed, vital Actions must necessarily follow. So that if the difference between his Habits and his Acts (for the supporting of which this Distinction was manifestly contrived) amounts to no more than this, I envy him not any Advantage he can possibly make of it. But, 2. that which is most material to be observed is, how little this Author ascribes to Man in the Business of Conversion. He says, that after the same manner wherein Christ opened the Eyes of the Blind, and raised the Dead to Life, God produces in Man new Qualities, and excites them to Action. Now this cannot be true, unless God does as much towards the Conversion of a Sinner, as Christ did towards opening the Eyes of the Blind, and raising the Dead to Life. And if God does as much, it is then, I think, very easy to discern that the Sinner has nothing at all to do in the Matter.

§. III. I HAD not dwelt so long upon this Point, which is a great deal fuller of Subtily than it is of good Sense, but that I had a mind to draw these Men out of their secret Corners, and to convince the Reader beyond Exception,

(t) Homo se habet — active & efficienter, quia credit actu, & sub Deo operatur. Ita tamen causa dicitur suæ conversionis, ut ex seipso talis non sit, sed a gratia; tum quia virtus credendi est tantum a Deo, tum quia ipse credendi actus a Deo pendet, facultatem ad operationem suam excitante. Unde nihil inde pro viribus liberi arbitrii concludi potest. *Ibid.* §. 15.

(u) Quomodo in reddendo visu cæcis Christus duo egit, primo oculos aperuit, & ita vim videndi restituit; deinde fecit ut eodem momento videret. Ita in resurrectione Lazari anima primo fuit reddita corpori, deinde actiones vitales elicit. Sic Deus actione sua omnipotente producit in homine seu voluntate novas qualitates, deinde illas facultates excitat ad agendum. *Ibid.* §. 14.

that from the Beginning to the End God, according to them, is the sole Cause of Conversion. And for the same Reason I will, before I proceed to the Argument, beg Leave to observe one thing more: which is, that as they exclude Man from having any thing to do in the very Act of Conversion, so they do also exclude him from contributing any thing towards it by any Act or Acts antecedent to it. Did these Divines suppose that this Almighty Act of the Spirit, by which, as they say, Conversion is wrought, were dependent upon the previous Qualifications of Men, *i. e.* that God would certainly, at some time or other, exert this Almighty Act upon those, and those only, who had used such and such Means, and were so or so qualified, Man would then in some Sense be the Cause of his own Conversion. But this is not the Case; for though they talk much of preparatory Works, they allow not that these preparatory Works are the certain Means of Conversion. To qualify a Man for Conversion they say it is (w) *ordinarily* requisite that *he go to Church, hear and receive God's Word, understand the Divine Will, have some Sense of his Sins, some Fear of Punishment, and some Desires of Deliverance.* But then they do not say, nor will their Principles suffer them to say, that all who have used these Means, and are thus disposed, shall be sure of being converted. Conversion you must know is the Privilege of the Elect only, *i. e.* of some particular Persons, who by an absolute immutable Decree are pre-ordained to Eternal Life. They therefore are the (x) only Subjects of efficacious, *i. e.* of irresistible Grace; so that as to the rest, let them use what Means they will, and let them be qualified how they will, they will not, after all that they have done, after all that they can do, be one Step nearer to Conversion than they were before. Thus much I thought it proper to acquaint my Reader with concerning the Nature of Conversion as explained by these Men. And now the State of the Controversy being, as I suppose, clearly and fully laid open, I proceed to that which I first proposed, *viz.* to shew the Contradiction that this Doctrine bears to those general Propositions concerning the Manner of the Spirit's Operations, which have been established in the foregoing Chapter. †

§. IV. My first Proposition then, as you must remember, was this, That P. 277, to
 “such is the Manner of the Spirit's Operations, that Faith, Obedience, and 282.
 “all Improvements in Holiness, are nevertheless the proper and genuine Effects
 “of the Revelation of the Gospel, *i. e.* of the Word of God.” But if the a-
 forementioned Doctrine be true, this Proposition must necessarily be false. For
 if without an immediate Act of the Spirit working upon the Mind, Conversion
 must always be impossible; and if this immediate Act of the Spirit being
 once supposed, Conversion must then necessarily follow; what can be more
 plain than that Conversion is not at all the Effect of God's Word, but wholly
 of this immediate Operation? The Word of God can be the Cause of Conver-
 sion no otherwise than as it moves the Heart to Faith and Repentance, by
 those Arguments or rational Grounds of Conviction which it proposes to us.
 Now as this immediate Almighty Act of the Spirit is contradistinguished to
 the Use of Reason and Argument, so it is plain, and these Divines expressly
 teach, (y) that till this Almighty Act of the Spirit exerts it self, and the
 Mind thereby becomes regenerate, all Arguments and Persuasions must ne-
 cessarily be fruitless and ineffectual. Upon this Hypothesis then the Word of

(w) In vocatione ordinaria——varii sunt actus antecedanei ad conversionem——vel externi qui ab ho-
 mine fieri possunt, quales sunt Templum adire, verbum audire, & similia; vel interni qui a gratia etiam in non-
 dum conversorum cordibus excitantur; quales sunt verbi propositi receptio, notitia voluntatis Divinæ, sensus
 aliquis peccati, timor pœnæ, & desiderium aliquale liberationis. *Id.* Quæst. 5. §. 4.

(x) Orthodoxi——negant teneri Deum talem gratiam (sc. salutarem) omnibus largiri, & eam velle actu con-
 ferre, & reipsa singulis impartiri; sed tantum illis qui vocantur κατὰ πρόβλεπον, nimirum electis. *Id.* 16. Quæst.
 3. §. 11.

(y) Nec verbum quantavis evidentia propositum, & qualibuscunque circumstantiis & adminiculis vestitum, pos-
 sit istum effectum (sc. conversionem) producere, nisi accederet arcana, ineffabilis, & hyperphysica Spiritus o-
 peratio, quæ immediate animam afficiat, & vi omnipotente flectat. *Ibid.* Quæst. 4. §. 23, and 31.

God can have no Force till Conversion be actually wrought; and therefore to say after this that Conversion is the Effect of God's Word, is to make the Effect antecedent to *the Cause*, than which nothing can be more absurd and irrational. "To say that the Operations of the Spirit produce their Effects irresistibly, because they are joined with the Word, is to ascribe an irresistible Operation to the Word as well as to the Spirit, or rather to make the Irresistibility arise from the Concurrence of both these Causes. Now besides that upon this Hypothesis all Men to whom the Gospel is made known would be converted, seeing we have proved the Ministration of the Gospel to be accompanied with the Operations of the Spirit in all that hear it; besides this, I say, these Men do not place the irresistible Force, by which, as they say, Conversion is wrought, in the Concurrence of the Word and Spirit, but in the sole Operation of the Spirit." * They say indeed that ordinarily the Spirit (z) *does not operate without the Word*, but then they ascribe not the Irresistibility of the Spirit's Operation to it's Concurrence with the Word, but to the Nature of the Operation it self; for they say it is almighty, and if so, it must needs be irresistible, whether the Word concurs with it, or concurs not with it. † "Now that Conversion should at the same time be an Effect of God's Word, which, as they say, a Man cannot but resist till he is converted, and of such an Operation of the Spirit too as is altogether irresistible, is to me as unintelligible as Transubstantiation. For if it were only said that 'tis possible for a Man to resist the Force of God's Word, and withal granted that Conversion must as well be an Effect of God's Word as of the Holy Spirit operating upon our Minds, it would plainly follow that his Operations were resistible. The reason is, because where an Effect depends upon the Concurrence of two Causes, he that hath it always in his Power to resist the Force of the one, is at any time able to frustrate the other also. Wherefore, I say, when the Operations of the Spirit conspire with the Word to convert a Sinner, if he may be obstinate against the latter, he may also quench the former, and then they are not irresistible." It is plain then that this Doctrine does wholly exclude the Word of God from being the Cause of a Sinner's Conversion. Now to say this in express Terms, would sound so horridly in the Ears of every sober Christian, that I perceive these Men themselves dare not venture upon it. * No, they tell us on the contrary, that (a) *the preaching of the Word is the fittest and most agreeable Means of Conversion that can be propounded to a reasonable Creature*, that (b) *it concurs to Conversion* efficienter, or under the Notion of an EFFICIENT Cause; and that (c) *a seasonable and prudent Dispensation of it CONTRIBUTES MUCH towards the Success of that good Work*. All this they say, and thus much they found themselves obliged to say; because, as they rightly observe, (d) *those Elogies which are in Scripture bestowed upon the Word, as that it is the Seed of our Regeneration, that it enlightens the Understanding, sanctifies the Heart, and the like, are convincing Proofs that God makes use of it as a most EFFICACIOUS INSTRUMENT towards Conversion*. Thus far we are agreed. But the main Work is still behind, viz. to reconcile all this with what they teach concerning the Manner of the Spirit's Operation, a thing which appears to be utterly impossible, even according to the Account which they themselves give of the Matter.

(z) Dico Spiritum non agere sine verbo — certum (enim) est verbum necessario concurrere debere cum Spiritu, ad nostri conversionem ex ordine Dei. *Ibid.*

(a) Medium quo Deus utitur ad homines convertendos (est) — verbi præconium; quo nullum aptius & convenientius creaturæ rationali dari potuit. *Ibid.* Quæst. 1. §. 4.

(b) Verbum — efficienter concurrat — in conversione. *Ibid.* Quæst. 4. §. 17.

(c) Non dubium est quin apta & sapiens ejus (sc. verbi) dispensatio, multum conferat ad boni operis (sc. conversionis) successum. *Ibid.* §. 23.

(d) Omnia elogia quæ verbo tribuuntur, ut, quod sit regenerationis nostræ semen, quod illuminet mentem, quod sanctificet corda — & similia; evincunt quidem conversionem non fieri sine verbo, & Spiritum Sanctum eo uti, tanquam organo efficacissimo, ad ejus productionem. *Ibid.* §. 47.

For when they tell us that the Word is the efficient Cause of Conversion, they mean only that it is the efficient Cause of actual Conversion. For as to (e) habitual Conversion, they say expressly that *the Word, properly speaking, has no EFFICIENCY at all, but is only something, which BEING PRESENT, the principal Cause (i. e. the Spirit) operates.* But if the Word be not the efficient Cause of habitual Conversion, it is absurd to suppose that it should be the efficient Cause of actual. For this being the necessary Effect or Consequence of the other, and not being at all distinguishable from it in the Order of Time, i. e. no Time intervening between the one and the other, 'tis plain that here is no room left for Reason and Argument to take place, nor consequently for the Word (which can operate no other way than by Reason and Argument) to obtain any Efficiency. †

§. V. My second Proposition was, That the Spirit operates in such a Manner as is suitable to the Nature of Mankind. “But you may as soon reconcile²⁸⁷ Light with Darkness,” as you can this Rule “with that Opinion concerning the Manner of the Spirit’s Operations which these Men contend for. For let them tell me whether” Man, who is a rational and accountable Creature, “be, according to his Nature, suited to be wrought upon by such a Power as makes not the least Use of the Understanding, of the least Thought or intellectual Operation whatsoever, and whether this immediate almighty Act of the Spirit be not such a Power?” For my own part, I have no Notion “what it is to work upon a rational Being in a way suitable to its Nature, unless it be to work upon it in a rational way, i. e. by convincing, by persuading, by prevailing, by the Power of Truth. But that irresistible Power which these Men make to be the immediate Cause of Conversion, is not supposed to work this way at all, but is (as I before observed) contradistinguished to all Use of Reason whatsoever, and produceth its Effect by natural Necessity. So that you may as well say that a Clock strikes, and the Clapper makes the Bell sound in a rational manner, as that such a Power works Conversion in a rational manner. If the Operation of the Spirit, by which a Man is converted, carries no Force of Reason with it, the Soul is then moved as if it were a senseless Machine, which” moves not it self, but only “obeys the Laws of Motion”^{*}; upon which Principle it will be impossible that Man should be an accountable Creature. For that which makes Man an accountable Creature, is that Freedom or Liberty of Choice, by which he can either act or he can forbear, by which he can obey the Will of God or disobey it; but all this supposes a Man to be governed by Reason and Persuasion; for how can that Action be said to be free, concerning which there is no room for a Man to deliberate whether he shall do it, or whether he shall not do it? In short, unless Conversion be supposed to be a Man’s own Act, he cannot be accountable. But if Conversion be the Effect of such an immediate Operation of the Spirit, as if being absent a Man cannot be converted, and if being present a Man cannot but be converted, it is plain, and I have already shewn, that Conversion is then not at all an Act of Man, but wholly and solely the Act of God. †

§. VI. THIS is so convincing an Argument, that I might here very safely take my Leave of the Point before me, were it not that I think my self bound in Justice not to pass over what these Divines alledge, in order to reconcile Conversion by this immediate almighty Act of the Spirit, with its being an Act of our own free Choice.” And first, they tell us, “That at the same

(e) Ad verbum quod attinet, quamvis efficienter concurrat — in conversione actuali — tamen in conversione habituali — nullam proprie efficientiam obtinet, nec tam est ex genere eorum instrumentorum quæ attingunt ipsum effectum, quam eorum ad quorum præsentiam causa principalis operatur. *Ibid.* §. 17.

“ Instant of Time wherein the Will is acted upon (f) it acts it self, and so pre-
 “ serves its Liberty entire. To which I reply, 1. That it cannot be said that
 “ the Will, or the Soul, considered as a free Agent, does as such act any
 “ thing at that Instant of Time when it is immediately and irresistibly con-
 “ verted by the Spirit. If they mean indeed that the Soul acts as my Pen
 “ does when I am writing, or as an Engine does when it is set a going, I grant
 “ it; but 'tis plain that no such Action can properly be said to be an Act of
 “ the Will, or a free Action. But, 2. Whatever Act you ascribe to the Will
 “ at the Time of Conversion, it cannot truly be pretended that by this Act the
 Liberty of the Will is preserved. The reason is, because” there having been
 no Liberty antecedent to the Act of the Spirit in Conversion, “there will be
 “ none to be preserved by any Act you would have to be contemporary with
 “ it. Such is the Nature of this Act of the Spirit, that it converts by a great-
 “ er Necessity of the same Kind, than that whereby Mechanical Causes pro-
 “ duce their Effects. Now if this Act be the immediate Cause of Conversion,”
 and if without this Act Conversion cannot be, it is notorious that antecedent-
 ly to it the Soul is void of all Kind of Liberty. Wherefore these Men do but
 “ beg the Question when they say, that the Grace they speak of *so Acts our*
 “ *Wills, as that they also act themselves, and that freely.*” * And this in part
 may serve for an Answer to what they alledge, Secondly, viz. That (g) *by the*
Infusion of these supernatural Habits the Soul, which was before UNWILLING, is
now made WILLING to comply with the Divine Will. For this is only saying,
 that when a Man is once converted, he becomes willing, which must needs be
 true; because to be disposed willingly to comply with the Divine Will, is the
 very Notion of Conversion. But the Question is not whether, Conversion
 being once supposed, a Man acts freely and willingly; but whether he be con-
 verted freely and willingly, i. e. whether his Conversion be owing to any Act
 or Acts of his own free Choice; which it will be absurd to say, if a Man can-
 not be converted without such an immediate Act or Operation of the Spirit, as
 makes it impossible for him not to be converted. This likewise shews the
 Vanity of what they alledge, Thirdly, viz. That (h) *the Notion of Liberty does*
not consist in Indifferency, i. e. in having a Power either to will or nill, either to
do an Action or to forbear. For we are told that *the Angels and Saints* in Hea-
 ven act not under this *Indifferency*, but *by Necessity, and yet with the greatest*
Freedom, and hence they infer that Conversion, though it be necessary, may
 also be free. The Weakness of this Answer, I say, appears plainly from what
 has been said. For the Necessity which these Men now speak of, is evidently
 a Necessity arising from the most perfect Rectitude of Will, by which the Mind
 constantly and immutably determines it self to the Choice of that which is best;
 and such a Necessity as this I grant indeed to be consistent with the most per-
 fect Liberty. But, 1. These Men do not suppose, nor can it be supposed, that
 there is such a Rectitude of Will as this in the Unregenerate, i. e. in the Un-
 converted, and consequently a Man must first of all be converted before he
 can act necessarily in this Sense of Necessity. But I say again, that the Que-
 stion is not whether after Conversion a Man acts freely or necessarily, or both;
 but, whether Conversion it self be the Effect of Liberty; in which Question
 'tis plain that this Answer gives us no manner of Satisfaction. But their Do-
 ctine of irresistible Grace gives us full Satisfaction, and plainly shews, that an-
 teddently to Conversion there is no such thing as Liberty, and consequently

(f) Conversionem habitualement sequitur actualis, in qua homo actus agit, Deo ex ipsa mutata voluntate actum credendi & convertendi propiciente, & anima ipsa sic mota, actum suum vitalem libere eliciente. Ibid. §. 14.

(g) Spiritus non cogit voluntatem & invitam ad conversionem rapit, sed suavissime in animam inhabitat, & licet miro ac ineffabili modo, voluntati tamen convenientissimo operatur, per infusionem habituum supernaturalium, quibus ab innata pravitate paulatim liberatur, ut ex nolente fiat volens. Ibid. §. 16.

(h) Πρώτον ψεύδος Adversariorum est, libertatem positam esse in ἀδιαφορία, nec consistere posse cum necessitate, quod non semel refutavimus exemplo Angelorum & Beatorum, quorum actus obedientiae est quidem necessarius—sed tamen liberrimus. Id. Quaest. 6. §. 29.

that Conversion cannot be the Effect of Liberty. For let it be supposed that by Conversion the Mind receives such an Alteration, as that the Will must hereby be constantly and immutably determined agreeably to the Will of God. Here 'tis true will be Liberty and Necessity both joined together. But this is not the Case. For the Question still remains to be answered, how or by what means it comes to pass that the Mind receives this Change? And their Answer in short is this, That it is by the Infusion of supernatural Habits. But I ask, Is it for the sake of any thing that we do, that God infuses these supernatural Habits? No, it is an Act of his own free and undeserved Bounty. Can we, by any thing we are able to do, make such a Change in our selves, without the Infusion of these supernatural Habits? No, we cannot. Can we, by any Endeavours of our own, hinder this Change, these supernatural Habits being once infused? Nor that. But where then is the Liberty antecedent to Conversion? Or how can Conversion be the Effect of Liberty, when it arises immediately from a Cause, which a Man cannot procure when it is wanting, and the Effect of which he cannot hinder when it comes? But, 2^{dly}, Such a Rectitude of Will as must be supposed to render the Actions of Men necessary at the same time that they are free, is not to be found, even in the Converted; I may say too, nor in any created Being. For though the Angels and Saints in Heaven perform the Will of God with a wonderful Readiness, yet they cannot be supposed to do it with a Readiness equal to that wherewith the Divine Will it self is determined to that which is best. Much less can *Man*, who in his best State feels many sinful Inclinations, many Struglings of the Flesh against the Spirit. And now the whole Fallacy of these Mens Reasonings opens it self all at once. They tell us that Men are converted by an immediate almighty Act of the Spirit. We answer, that then Conversion will be the Effect not of Choice, but of Necessity. They grant that Conversion is necessary, but contend that it is also free. But to make this out they fly to such a Notion of Necessity as can have no place at all in the Controversy, a Necessity which even the converted themselves are not under, and which Man consistently with his Nature cannot possibly be subjected to. I say consistently with his Nature. For by Nature Man is a Probationer in this Life; there is an everlasting State hereafter appointed for him, in which he shall be either happy or miserable, according as he has either obeyed or disobeyed the Commandments of God. But this could not be the Case, if Man either by Nature or by Grace had such a Rectitude of Will imparted to him, as subjected him to a Necessity of conforming himself to the Divine Will. For upon this Supposition, as on the one hand there would be no Possibility of his committing Evil, so on the other hand there would be no room for him by the Good he does to merit a Reward. Wherefore though Liberty, in the general Idea of it, be not inconsistent with Necessity, yet Human Liberty is. For this must be supposed to consist in a Power of acting or forbearing, of obeying or not obeying the Divine Will. Now since, as I have shewn (and as by their Argument these Men seem to grant) that immediate almighty Act of the Spirit, by which, as they say, Conversion is wrought, destroys this Power; it clearly follows that the Manner of the Spirit's Operations, as explained by them, destroys Human Liberty, and consequently is not suitable to the Nature of Mankind.

§. VII. My third Proposition was, That "such is the Manner of the Spirit's Operations, as that our own Care and Endeavours after Vertue and Godliness are not thereby rendered unnecessary." But what Care, what Endeavours can be necessary, if the Principles of these Men be true? Before the almighty irresistible Impulse of the Spirit seizes us, all we can do will avail us nothing; we may go to Church if we please, we may hear and read God's Word, we may consider the Rewards of Obedience on the one hand, and the Punishments of Disobedience on the other; all this, I say, we may do, and we may as well

†
p. 286.

let it alone; for all this, and as much more as you can imagine, will but leave us where we were——till the Spirit comes, and with an uncontrollable Force hurries down all before it. And then the Work goes on nimbly! Then we shall be snatched away into Goodness all at once! We shall have Virtues, which before we never thought of, Graces and good Dispositions, which we never laboured after, the whole Body of Sin will be destroyed as by a sudden Blast of Wind, and a Principle of new Life, like a Flash of Lightning, dart into our Souls, which nothing that either the Devil, or we our selves can do, will be able to extinguish!† So that, as far as I can perceive, according to this Doctrine, “a Man may become a Convert when he thinks of nothing less, as well as when his Thoughts are busied about it; nay, ’tis all one whether he be sleeping or waking, whether he dreams of it or of something else; the habitual Villain stands as fair for Conversion as the most ingenuous Nature, and he may be converted as easily at the Point of Death, as if he were to begin his Race again, and were not hardened by a Custom of sinning.* You will say perhaps that ordinarily the Spirit does not operate without the Use of outward Means, and that therefore there is Danger, lest by the Neglect of these Means you should not be found in the Way of Conversion. But take Courage Man! There is a Decree passed in Heaven, which is never to be reversed, and if thou canst but persuade thy self that thou art of the Number of the Elect, thou oughtest not to fear but at some time or other God will step a little out of the Way to call thee. He who hath ordained the End, hath doubtless also ordained the Means to bring about that End; and therefore if thou art not yet disposed to become good, but hast a mind to indulge thy Lusts for a while longer, sit thee down, *take thine Ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* The Time will come when thy stubborn Heart shall be made to submit, and the Flesh be subdued to the Spirit, how great Advantage soever it may have gained over it by a long and continued Course of Wickedness. I leave it to any impartial Man to judge, whether this be not the plain and necessary Consequence of this Doctrine, even the encouraging Men in Laziness and Indifference in Religion. The Attempts which these Men make to avoid this Consequence are so very weak and trifling, that one would be tempted to think they saw it clearly enough themselves. But ’tis happy for them if they do not, unless they could hereby be prevailed upon to part with the Premises. For when once Men are become such Slaves to a dangerous Hypothesis, as to be got beyond the Power of Conviction, Ignorance in the Extent of their own Principles is then to be wished for, as their best and their only Security.

§. VIII. AND thus I have shewn the Opposition that this Doctrine of the Manner of the Spirit’s Operation bears to the three first of those general Propositions which have been laid down in the foregoing Chapter. It might have been observed, that this Doctrine supposing Conversion to be an instantaneous as well as an irresistible Act of the Spirit, it therefore contradicts the fourth, which is, that “the Spirit does not work his Graces in us all at once, but by such Steps and Degrees as suit with our Capacities and Qualifications. But for as much as I am at present concerned with this Doctrine no farther than as it supposes the Grace of God to be irresistible, I shall therefore reserve what I have farther to say upon that Matter, till I come to discourse particularly of REGENERATION. †

CHAP.

C H A P. IX.

A farther Confutation of the above mentioned Doctrine, from the general Commands, Exhortations, Promises and Threatnings, in the Scripture.

* §. I. **H**AVING shewn the Opposition that the Doctrine of irresistible Grace bears to those general Propositions which are above laid down, I proceed, Secondly, to apply some Arguments of another nature, whereby the Falshood of it will be more fully evinced. I begin with those general Commands, those Exhortations, those Promises, and those Threatnings, which we meet with in the Scriptures. Particular Instances of this sort need not to be produced, because they are every where to be found; and the Argument drawn from them against this Doctrine methinks is such as cannot fail of convincing those, who are not enslaved by Prejudice and Prepossession. For if Conversion is to be effected by such a Power only as God alone is able to bestow, why does he so earnestly and so passionately call and invite Sinners to Repentance? Why are *the Terrors of the Lord* made use of to *persuade Men*, if all the while Men are incapable of being wrought upon by Persuasion? Common Sense will tell us, that if it be not the Subject of a Man's Choice whether he will be converted or not converted, such Methods as these must be either vain or superfluous. For a thing is then vain, either when it is designed for no End or Purpose at all; or when it is not adequate to the End propounded by it. Now 'tis plain that one or other of these must be affirmed of the Commands, the Exhortations, the Promises and the Threatnings of the Gospel, if this Doctrine be true. For by these God must intend to bring Men to Repentance, or he can intend nothing. But if Conversion be impossible without such an irresistible Operation of the Spirit as these Men contend for, then these Means are not adequate to the End propounded. And 'tis evident that such an irresistible Operation being once supposed, these Means contribute nothing to that End; for the End is already supposed to be effected by another Cause. According to this Doctrine then the Commands, the Exhortations, the Promises and the Threatnings of the Gospel must be useless to all sorts of Men. They are useless to the Elect, *i. e.* to those who shall be saved, for these at some time or other will necessarily be converted: And they are useless to the Reprobate, *i. e.* to those who shall be damned, for to these Conversion will always be impossible. Nor will it help to say, as these Men do, that ordinarily the Spirit does not operate without these Means, and that therefore these Means are not useless. For though the Spirit does not operate without these Means, yet since according to them he does not work Conversion by these Means, but by an immediate irresistible Act, the Difficulty still remains to be resolved, *viz.* how these Means can be at all useful to Conversion. The Presence of these Means cannot make them useful, if being present they contribute nothing to the End to be effected. Now according to this Doctrine this is truly the Case, and therefore all this no better than shuffling off an Objection instead of answering it. I speak this with respect only to those who either are actually converted, or will hereafter at some time or other be converted, *i. e.* to the Elect; for as to the Reprobate, the Vanity and Insignificancy of these Means, supposing Conversion to be the End intended by them, is so very apparent, that these Men themselves dare not deny it. Therefore they tell us, that *(i) the Intention of God in calling* such as these by the

(i) Nos vero licet non negemus Reprobos, qui versantur in externa Ecclesiæ Communione, vocari a Deo per Evangelium; negamus tamen eo consilio & intentione vocari, ut salutis reipsa fiant participes. *Id. Ibid. Quæst. 2. §. 2.*

Gospel, *is not their Conversion*: in which that they may not be thought to charge God foolishly, they therefore have contrived some other Ends, which they suppose are fully answered by the Commands and Exhortations, by the Promises and Threatnings, and which, as they think, do fully justify the Divine Proceedings in this Particular. My Business shall be to enquire what these Ends are, and then to consider how well the Account which these Men give of the Matter clears God from the Imputation of Hypocrisy and Insincerity, whilst he calls Men to Repentance, and promises Salvation upon such Terms and Conditions, as he very well knows it is in the nature of the thing impossible that they should fulfil.

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Part. II.
P. 142,
143.

§. II. THE first End which these Men assign to the Commands and Exhortations, the Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel, is (*k*) *the prescribing to Men their Duty, the informing them what God requires from them, and what they owe to him, viz. that they should believe and repent.* Now to this I reply, First, That there is no such thing as Duty where the Performance of the thing commanded has always been impossible; and therefore if Men never were, nor ever will be, able to believe and repent, it is ridiculous to suppose that God should require them to believe and repent. Secondly, † It is false to say, that the prescribing to Men what is their Duty is the End of the Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel. For “whatsoever is to be done
“ or not to be done, is fully declared in the Precepts and Prohibitions, and
“ all that is declared in the Promises and Threatnings is the Reward we
“ shall obtain” if we fulfil the Commandments of God, “and the Punish-
“ ments we shall incur if we disobey them. So that it is plain that the End
“ of these things cannot be to inform us of our Duty, but to constrain us
“ to Obedience by the Motives of Hope and Fear.” Thirdly, Though it be true that the End of the Commands and Exhortations of the Gospel is to inform us of our Duty, yet it is not the principal End even of these, because Knowledge it self is subordinate to a farther End, *i. e.* to Obedience. This is evident, 1st, from the Express Words of St. Paul, 1 Tim. 1. 5. “*The END*
“ *of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart, and of a good Conscience,*
“ *and of Faith unfeigned.* And therefore he exhorts Believers *to walk so as*
“ *to please God, and to abound more and more, because they knew what Command-*
“ *ments he had given them by the Lord Jesus,* 1 Thess. 4. 1, 2. 2^{dly}, The
“ Reward is promised not to Knowledge, but to Obedience; therefore O-
“ bedience, and not Knowledge, is the Principal End of the Law. *For not*
“ *the HEARERS of the Law are just before God, but the DOERS of the Law shall*
“ *be justified,* Rom. 2. 13. 3^{dly}, That is the principal End of the Law, with-
“ out which all other Ends of the Law being attained, do not profit, but
“ hurt. Now our Saviour tells us, that *he that KNOWETH his Master's Will,*
“ *and DOETH it NOT, shall be beaten with many Stripes, i. e.* shall be by so
“ much the more severely punished; therefore again Obedience, and not
“ Knowledge, is the principal End of the Law.

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§. III. FROM all this it is evident that it cannot truly be said, that the declaring to Men their Duty is at all the End of the Promises and Threatnings, or that it is the principal End of the Commands and Exhortations of the Gospel. * And this will shew the Vanity of what is alledged, Secondly, *viz.* That (*l*) *another End of God's calling Men by the Gospel* (even those whom he

(*k*) Finis primus (sc. vocationis per Evangelium) est præscriptio officii, ut sciat quid ab ipso (sc. homine) exigat Deus, & quid ipsi debeat, nimirum ut credat & resipiscat. *Ibid.* §. 6. Promissiones & minæ additæ Dei mandatis nihil magis expriment de Dei mente & intentione quam ipsa mandata, quæ ostendunt quid sit Dei præcipientis voluntas. *Ibid.* §. 20. Præcepta & promissiones sunt regulæ officii, non mensura virium. *Id. Ibid.* Quæst. 5. §. 17.

(*l*) Secundus (finis vocationis) est promissio beneficii, posita conditione; ut cognoscat quid Deus dare constituerit credentibus, & pœnitentibus. *Ibid.* Quæst. 2. §. 6.

never intends to put into a Capacity of believing and repenting) *is the promising them a Reward upon certain Conditions, i. e. that they may know what God is resolved to give to those who believe and repent.* For the Question still returns upon them: To what purpose God should do all this, if the Conditions upon which he promises this Reward be impossible? The offering Salvation to Mankind, and shewing them by what Means this Salvation is to be attained, is without doubt the End of the preaching of the Gospel. But this End can never be justified without the Supposition of a farther End, to which this may be subordinate, *viz. the real and actual Attainment of Salvation by those to whom Salvation is offered.* Yes, say they, it may; for, (m) Thirdly, *The Depravity of Man's Heart is hereby discovered, and he himself rendered inexcusable in his Contumacy and Disobedience.* Very true, if you suppose it possible for him to comply with those Terms or Conditions upon which Salvation is proposed to him. But if not, nothing can be more absurdly offered. For where is the Stubbornness in transgressing those Laws which it is absolutely out of a Man's Power to fulfil? Or how can those Acts render a Man inexcusable, which are committed against no Law by which he is bound, and which consequently imply under them no Fault for which he needs to be excused? We are told, I know, that (n) *in order to render a Man inexcusable, it is enough to take from him all Pretence of Ignorance.* But it is the first time I ever heard that Knowledge without Power is sufficient to render any one a proper Subject of moral Obligations; and those who are not ashamed to maintain that it is, I think verily need not be ashamed to maintain any thing.

§. IV. UPON the whole therefore it plainly appears, that upon the Principles of these Divines no tolerable Account can be given of the Method of God's proceeding with Sinners. In truth, That the imposing Laws, the backing them with Promises on the one hand, and with Threatnings on the other, is a plain Indication that it is the Design and Intention of the *Lawgiver* that these Laws should be obeyed by all those upon whom they are imposed, is one of those things which are so very apparent to common Sense, that it is impossible, by any thing that can be said, to make them clearer. What else then do these Men do, than charge God with Hypocrisy and Dissimulation, in saying, that Conversion is not the End which he has in View, when by all these Means he calls upon Sinners, and invites them to Repentance? He is a Hypocrite and a Dissembler who makes a Shew or Appearance of something which in reality he does not intend. Now God by commanding, by exhorting, by promising, and by threatening, does plainly make a Shew that he would have Men converted; and yet, if you will believe these Men, he has all this while not the least Design or Intention that they should be converted! But they undertake (and what is it that for the sake of an *Hypothesis* they will not undertake) to encounter even with this Difficulty. What they offer upon this Head is wrapt up in such Clouds of Obscurity, that 'tis hard to come at it; but the Substance of it, so far as I can gather, is this, *viz. 1st, That (o) God sincerely intends to give Salvation to all those who perform the Conditions upon which it is offered, i. e. to all those who believe and repent. 2dly, That (p) in calling Sinners to Repentance*

(m) Tertius (vocationis finis) est detectio pravitatis cordis, & inexcusabilitas, supposita ejus contumacia. *Ibid.*

(n) Ad reddendum hominem inexcusabilem sufficit tollere ipsi prætextum ignorantiae, non vero impotentiae. *Ibid.* §. 28.

(o) Quamvis Deus non intenlat salutem Reprobatorum eos vocando, maxime tamen serio & sincere agit — quia serio & verissime ostendit illis unicam, & certissimam viam ad salutem — & sincerissime promittit illis omnibus qui eam secuti fuerint, credentibus sc. & poenitentibus, salutem. Nec promittit tantum, sed reipsa confert juxta promissionem. *Ibid.* §. 14. Promissio absoluta non potest esse seria, nisi fundetur in — intentione promittentis dandi quod promittitur. Sed alia ratio est conditionata; sufficit ad salvandam ejus sinceritatem, ut sit intentio in Deo connectendi certissime rem promissam cum conditione, ut nusquam ista occurrat quin illa eam comiretur, &c. *Ibid.* §. 17.

(p) Vocatio ostendit quidem quid Deus velit jubere hominem ut faciat, non vero quid decreverit ipse facere; docet quid Deo gratum sit & acceptum — nimirum ut vocati ad se veniant, sed non quid ipse de homine facere constituerit; — non quid actu decreverit dare huic vel illi, *Ibid.* §. 15.

by the Gospel, God shews indeed what he approves, and is pleased that Man should do, i. e. that he should believe and repent, but not what he himself intends to do, i. e. not that he will give him Power sufficient to enable him to believe and repent. Now the first of these Answers is plainly nothing at all to the purpose. For the Question is not whether God deals sincerely in promising Salvation to all those who believe and repent, but whether he deals sincerely in offering Salvation upon these Terms to those whom he never intends should believe and repent. This he may not do, and yet be very sincere in his general Promise. For when God declares that he will give Salvation to all those who believe and repent, he declares no more than that this Reward shall infallibly be annexed to the Performance of these Conditions; and consequently he is sincere in this Promise, if he really intends that none who believe and repent shall fail of Salvation. But when God makes a Tender of this Reward upon these Conditions (as he certainly does to all Sinners without Exception) he thereby in effect declares his Intention to be, not only in general that he will give the Reward upon the Performance of the Conditions, but that those very Persons to whom he makes this Offer should obtain the Reward in virtue of these Conditions; and consequently if, as these Men say, he does not really intend this, his Offer must be insincere and hypocritical. This then shews the Insufficiency of the first Answer; and as to the second, I know not well what to make of it. For the first part of it either has no meaning at all, or else it gives up the thing in question, whilst the latter part again very plainly and palpably contradicts it. To say that God in calling Sinners to Repentance, shews that he is pleased, and approves that they should repent, is to say that it shews it to be his Will and Intention that they should repent, or it is to say nothing. But this cannot be true, if at the same time God does not declare what he himself intends to do. For if it be pleasing and acceptable to God that Sinners should repent and be converted, he must at the same time that he declares this, declare also what he himself intends to do, so far as to signify that nothing shall be wanting on his Part which is necessary to enable them to fulfil his Pleasure. I am ashamed and provoked to find such trifling as this (and indeed as all that they say in Defence of the Doctrine I am now opposing) is in the Writings of Christian Divines, and Men of Learning! But thus it must be with those who disdain to be confined within the Bounds of common Sense, and are set upon it to maintain and defend such Principles as are in their own Natures indefensible.

§. V. THE Result of what has been said is this, that God does really intend the Conversion of all those whom by Commands and Exhortations, by Promises, and by Threatnings, he calls to Conversion, i. e. of all Sinners without Exception. And this is the plain and obvious Sense of those Words of the Apostle, 2 Pet. 3. 9. where we are told that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance. Now if God intends by these Means to bring Men to Repentance, then these Means must be sufficient to bring Men to Repentance, unless you'll say that God proposes an End by insufficient Means, which is absurd and blasphemous. But it is plain that these Means cannot be sufficient to bring Men to Repentance, if notwithstanding the Use and Application of these Means, Conversion will always be impossible, until it be wrought irresistibly by an immediate Act or Operation of the Spirit. Conversion therefore must needs be possible without such a Power as makes it impossible not to be converted; † and if any one shall think fit to call this *Pelagianism* (as indeed it is but too common with Men, and especially those with whom I have now to do, to give hard Names when they have nothing else to say) I answer, that there is no Ground for this Imputation. For I only say that it is possible for all those to be converted, whom God by his Commands, his Exhortations, his Promises, and his Threatnings, calls upon to be converted; and it is all one towards vindicating the "Seriousness of God" in making use of "these Means," whether

whether this Possibility arises "from Nature or from Grace." That Conversion is impossible without the Grace of God, I not only grant, but contend as earnestly as they; but then I suppose (and I think the Application of these Means does plainly imply) that God by his Grace works Conversion in such a manner as to leave it to our own Choice whether we will be converted or not. And here I take my Leave of this Argument, which, had it not been for the unreasonable Cavillings of these Men, needed not to have been so long insisted upon. I am sensible that the most of what has been offered here, properly belongs to a Question which has already been discussed, *viz.* Who are the Subjects of special Grace? But there is this to be said in my Excuse, *viz.* that this Question bears so near an Affinity to that which I have now before me, that in treating upon them 'tis hardly possible to separate them the one from the other.

CHAP. X.

Some particular Texts of Scripture alledged for the Confutation of this Doctrine.

* §. I. **T**HUS much having been observed concerning the Laws and Exhortations of the Gospel in general, I shall now produce some particular Texts of Scripture, which in my Judgment do very clearly prove that the Operations of the Spirit in the Conversion of a Sinner may be resisted. The first I shall mention is that remarkable Passage in *Isaiah, Chap. 5. ver. 1. to 8.* where the Prophet by an elegant Parable represents to the People of the Jews their Stubbornness and Disobedience. *My Well-beloved hath a Vineyard in a very fruitful Hill (ver. 1.) And he fenced it, and gathered out the Stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest Vine, and built a Tower in the midst of it, and also made a Wine-press therein, and he looked that it should bring forth Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes (ver. 2.) And now, O Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and Men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between me and my Vineyard (ver. 3.) What could have been done more to my Vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth Grapes, brought it forth wild Grapes? (ver. 4.) And now go to, I will tell you what I will do to my Vineyard: I will take away the Hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up, and break down the Wall thereof, and it shall be troden down (ver. 5.) And I will lay it waste, it shall not be pruned nor digged, but there shall come up Briars and Thorns, &c. (ver. 6.) For the Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the House of Israel, and the Men of Judah his pleasant Plant; and he looked for Judgment, but behold Oppression, for Righteousness, but behold a Cry (ver. 7.)* I chose to recite to you the Passage at large, because there is scarce a Word in it which does not very much make for my Purpose. † The general Observations which I build upon it are these two, *viz.* First, that the Jews, here represented by the Lord's Vineyard, had all those Means bestowed upon them which were necessary for their Conversion; and yet, Secondly, that they were not converted, but remained as bad as ever. The last of these cannot possibly be questioned, and the first is very evident from these following Reasons, **viz.* 1st, from the Description the Parable gives us of God's Care and Endeavours for their Conversion. He had planted his Vine in a fertil Soil, he had set a Wall about his Vineyard, and gathered out the Stones thereof, *i. e.* he had done every thing which it was possible for a wise and prudent Husbandman to do to render his Vine fruitful. † 2^{dly}, from the Greatness of the Expectation, expressed by the building of a Tower, and making a Wine-press in the Vineyard, which shews "not only that they had all necessary Means and Helps, but even such as were

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“ moreover profitable and advantageous in the Way of Conversion; so that
 “ it was not only possible, but, considering what God had done for them,
 “ very likely that they would be converted. 3dly, From God’s own express
 Declaration concerning them. For this Question, *What could have been done
 more? &c.* is a very strong Assertion that *nothing more could have been done*; not as
 if God by his Omnipotence could have done no more; “ for doubtless if he had
 “ pleased he could have converted these obstinate Sinners in spite of all their
 Resistance.” But the Meaning is this, “ that no more remained to be done by
 “ him in a Way meet or proper for him to use towards reasonable Creatures;
 “ nothing could have been done more considering they were to be wrought
 “ upon as Men, *i. e.* unless they were to be converted otherwise than as
 “ Men; unless they were to be dealt with like Creatures that cannot under-
 “ stand, and were not to have the Use of that Liberty left them which be-
 “ longs to their Natures. It is thus, I say, that these Words are to be under-
 “ stood, because in respect of absolute Power no Man can deny that God, if
 “ he would, could have converted them. Now because he did not do so, it
 “ may therefore be very strongly concluded that it was not by his Wisdom
 “ judged meet and proper so to do. For if it was, and this had ever been his
 “ Way of converting Sinners, that Question, *What is to be done more that I have
 “ not done?* was not fit to be put to those Men, who knew well enough that
 “ the Grace they had frustrated could not possibly be irresistible.” But, 4thly,
 The Point I am now advancing is yet farther evident from the Punishment de-
 nounced against their Disobedience, which could not justly have been inflicted,
 upon Supposition that they had not all those Means which were necessary in
 order to Obedience. Lastly, There being here no mention made of any Reply
 that the *Jews* gave to this Expostulation, of which (since God appeals to them
 as their own Judges) it is exceeding probable some Notice had been taken, if
 there were any Reply that could be given; this, I say, shews plainly enough
 “ that no such thing as irresistible Grace was dreamt of in those Days.”
 For if it had, and they had thought that to have been (at least ordinarily)
 the Way which God made use of for the Conversion of Sinners, how reason-
 ably might it have been said that God had not done all that was meet and
 proper to be done with respect to them, since he had not done that which
 he very frequently did to others under the like Circumstances?

* * §. II. THUS stands the Argument drawn from this famous Passage in holy
 Writ; from whence it plainly appears, that when God has done all that it is
 necessary and fitting for him to do towards the Conversion of a Sinner, he
 may yet remain unconverted. The Exceptions that are made against this Ar-
 gument are so very frivolous, that they hardly deserve to be taken notice of.
 They tell us, for instance, that this Parable implies no more, than that God
 had used all those (q) *external Means* which were necessary in order (not to
 Conversion, but) to Conviction, such as *the preaching of his Word*, the *Blessings
 of his Providence*, and the like. But I say, that where Conversion has always
 been impossible, there can be no such thing as Conviction, *i. e.* Conviction
 of Sin; and therefore wherever there are sufficient Means of Conviction, it
 must be supposed that there has been also sufficient Means of Conversion. I say
 farther, that the Argument equally proves that the *Jews* had the internal neces-
 sary Means of Conversion as well as the external, † because if all necessary
 Means had not been present, God could not reasonably have expected their
 “ Conversion, nor complained of their Obstinacy, much less punished them

(q) Aliud est sufficere ad convictionem, in ordine mediorum externorum; aliud ad conversionem in ordine
 internorum. Verba *Isai.* cap. 5. 4. de prima sufficientia agunt, non de secunda — quia (Deus) se confert
 vinitori, qui plantat vineam in solo uberi, fossam circumducit, sepem præterendit, &c. id est, verbo plantat, be-
 neficiis excolit, protectione cingit, & facit ea omnia quæ a sedulo vinitore requiruntur — sed de vegetatione
 & influxu naturali non loquitur, &c. *Ibid.* Quæst. 3. §. 19.

“with the Severity threatened.” * ’Tis ridiculous to alledge, that because a Husbandman in the ordering of a Vine, to make it fruitful, applies only external Means, that therefore the Parable implies no more, than that God had made use of external Means towards the Conversion of the *Jews*. For the reason why the Husbandman applies only external Means is, because he cannot possibly apply any other; so that God having compared himself to a Husbandman, who had done every thing that he could do to make his Vine fruitful, it must (in order to make the Comparison just) be supposed that HE had done every thing that HE could do, *i. e.* all that it was meet and proper for him to do, towards the Conversion of the *Jews*; which yet cannot be said, if irresistible Grace be a fit and proper Way of bringing Men to Conversion. And whereas it is pretended, in the next place, that this Question, *What could have been done more? &c.* may not imply that God had used all proper Means to make the Vine fruitful, but only that nothing now remained (*r*) but to cut it down, this is absurd. For besides that no reason can be assigned why a Vine should be destroyed because it is unfruitful, unless all proper Means had been used to make it fruitful; besides this, I say, this Exposition is contrary to the express Words of the Text, which are manifestly an Expostulation concerning what had been already done, and not a Declaration of what God would hereafter do, for this follows in the next Verses, and is grounded upon this very Consideration, that no more could have been done than what had been done already. Lastly, It is very idly offered, that (*s*) the Expectation which is attributed to God in this Parable, does not argue any Uncertainty in the Event, or that God was deceived in what he expected, because the Argument does not suppose any such thing. The infinite Knowledge of the Supreme Being sets him above all Uncertainty, and consequently he cannot properly be said to expect any thing. But in speaking to Men God is pleased frequently to take upon himself the Person of a Man, and to represent himself as doing that which they would, or reasonably might, do upon a like Occasion. And this is here the Case. God is said to expect, or look for that which the Means he had used had made a thing proper and reasonable to be expected. But certainly the Conversion of the *Jews* could not have been a thing proper and reasonable to be expected by those who knew that these Means, how great soever they were, were yet insufficient to bring them to Conversion.

§. III. FROM this Text of the Prophet *Isaiah* I therefore now proceed to another of the Prophet *Ezekiel* (*Chap. 12. ver. 2.*) which, I think, is no less convincing: *Son of Man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious House, which have Eyes to see, and see not; they have Ears to hear, and hear not.* Here again it is plain, 1st, That the *Jews* here spoken of had all those Means vouchsafed them which were necessary for their Conversion, for they had *Eyes to see*, and *Ears to hear*; yet, 2^{dly}, they were not converted, for though they had *Eyes to see*, yet they *saw not*; and though they had *Ears to hear*, yet they *heard not*. We are told indeed that the Phrase of *having Eyes to see, and Ears to hear*, (*t*) does not denote that the *Jews* had the Grace of Conversion, *i. e.* that they had all the necessary Means of Conversion, but simply that they had a Power of understanding or knowing those Things which were required of them. But why so? Why, because *they are here said to be a rebellious House*. This proves indeed that the Meaning of the Phrase cannot be, that they were actually converted; but how does it prove the Mean-

(*r*) Verba — *quid ultra facere potui* — significant, nihil faciendum ultra restare — quam ut excindat eam. *Ibid.*

(*s*) Expectatio quæ Deo hic tribuitur — intelligenda est — non ad designandam infirmitatem expectantis, & incertitudinem eventus — quasi delusus fuerit in spe sua. *Ibid.*

(*t*) Oculi ad videndum, &c. de quibus *Ezech. 12. 2.* agitur, non possunt denotare conversionis gratiam, quia additur de domo *Israelis*, quod sit *domus rebellis* — sed notant tantum — intelligendi & percipiendi ea quæ proponebantur facultatem — alias si Deus dedisset illis oculos & aures spirituales novi hominis, non potuissent non videre & audire. *Ibid.* Quæst. 6. §. 24.

ing of it not to be, that they had Means sufficient for their Conversion? Why, because if the *Jews* had had the Grace of Conversion, they could not then but have seen and heard, *i. e.* they must have been converted. Very true, if you suppose that the Grace of God in Conversion operates irresistibly, but not else; and therefore this is answering an Objection by begging the very thing in question. But that the Phrase of having *Eyes to see, and Ears to hear*, does imply that the *Jews* had all those Means vouchsafed them which were necessary to Conversion, is very manifest, not only from the Usage of the same Phrase in (u) other Places in the Sacred Writings, but even from hence, *viz.* that they are here called a *rebellious House* for this reason, because *they had Eyes to see, and saw not, and Ears to hear, and heard not.* Now 'tis plain that the *Jews* were rebellious not only in this, that they neglected those Means of Knowledge that God had afforded them, but also, and that chiefly, in this, that being instructed in the Will of God, they still lived in Disobedience to it; for at *Chap. 2. 4.* they are said to be *impudent Children, and stiff-hearted.* The having *Eyes to see, and Ears to hear*, must therefore needs imply, that they had all the necessary Means of Conversion, because otherwise this would afford no good reason why in this Sense they should have been said to be *rebellious.* But if God had done all that was necessary and proper to be done on his Part, and they were wanting to themselves, if when it was in their Power to have been converted, yet they would not be converted, then indeed their not being converted might properly be charged upon them as an Act of Stubbornness. And that this was the Case, is farther evident from what follows in the very next Verse, *It may be they will consider, i. e.* (for thus the Word *consider* is frequently used in Scripture Language) *it may be they will repent, or be converted, though at present they are a rebellious House.* But how is this consistent with the Doctrine of irresistible Grace? Either God when he spake these Words, did intend afterwards to convert these Men irresistibly, or he did not. If he did, Conversion would then have been necessary and unavoidable; if he did not, it would have been impossible; upon either of which Suppositions it would have been improper and absurd to have said *it may be they will consider*, for this manifestly implies under it a Possibility either of being converted, or of not being converted.

§. IV. I SHALL now subjoin a few Places out of the New Testament, which being very clear and full to the Purpose, need only to be just mentioned to you. Thus then our Saviour speaks to the *Jews*, *Matth. 23. 37, 38. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not!* By gathering together under his Wings our Saviour means bringing them into a State of Favour and Acceptance with him, *i. e.* bringing them to Repentance. This, you see, he not only most passionately desired to do, but had moreover frequently attempted; and the reason why all these Attempts had been unsuccessful, he plainly tells them was not that he had withheld from them any necessary Means (for then he could not sincerely have pretended that he desired and had endeavoured their Conversion) but the Obstinacy and Untractableness of their own Hearts. *I would, says he, have gathered, but ye would not be gathered.* And this he tells them in another place was the reason why the last Tender of Mercy and Salvation, which he was then making to Mankind by the preaching of the Gospel, had been offered to them in vain. *These things I say unto you that ye might be saved — but ye WILL NOT come unto me that ye might have Life, John 5. 34. 40.* This same thing is also objected to them by the holy MARTYR St. Stephen, *Acts 7. 51. Ye stiff-necked,*

(u) See Deut. 29. 4. Matth. 13. 12, 13.

and uncircumcised in Heart and Ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. Here you see the *Jews* are expressly charged with *resisting the Holy Ghost, i. e.* with frustrating those gracious Methods which the holy Spirit had from time to time made use of to bring them to Repentance. But this could not have been truly said, if the Holy Ghost had never administered Means sufficient to bring them to Repentance, much less could they have deserved so severe a Reprimand for their stubborn and untractable Dispositions. Again, Our Saviour *upbraids* the Cities of *Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum*, with their Unbelief, telling them, that *if the mighty Works which were done in them had been done in Tyre and Sidon, and Sodom, the latter would have remained until that Day*, and the former repented long ago in Sackcloth and Ashes, Matth. 11. 20, 21, 23. Now if those Means which had been used towards those of *Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum*, would have converted *Tyre and Sidon, and Sodom*, then 'tis plain that they were sufficient; and yet if *Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum*, remained impenitent notwithstanding the Use of these Means, 'tis plain then they were not irresistible. If any one should alledge, that since the same Means which are sufficient for the Conversion of some, may not be sufficient for the Conversion of others, it does not therefore follow that because *Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum*, had those Means vouchsafed them which would have converted *Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom*, therefore they had sufficient Means; I answer, 1st, That though in the nature of the thing it may be true, that the same Means which are sufficient for the Conversion of some, may not be sufficient for the Conversion of others, yet it cannot be affirmed upon their Principles against whom I am now disputing. For they maintain that Conversion never is, or can be wrought, but by such an Act or Operation of the Spirit as is absolutely or in its own nature irresistible; according to them therefore it is plain that no Means can be sufficient with respect to some, which are not also sufficient with respect to others; for that must needs be always sufficient, which is absolutely, and therefore always incapable of being resisted. Wherefore, 2^{dly}, The Argument relies not precisely upon this, whether those of *Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum*, had sufficient Means of Conversion; for this Doctrine will be effectually overthrown, if it be true that *Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom*, might have been converted by those Means which were not absolutely irresistible. Now that those Means which were rendered ineffectual by those other Cities, were not absolutely irresistible, is notorious; and our Saviour expressly says, that *Tyre and Sidon, and Sodom*, not only might, but would, have been converted by those Means, had they been applied; therefore 'tis plain that *Tyre and Sidon, and Sodom*, might have been converted by those Means which were not absolutely irresistible. Yet, 3^{dly}, There can be no doubt but that *Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum*, had all those Means which were necessary to their Conversion. For our Saviour here expresses a great deal of Surprise and Indignation, that those Means which would have been effectual towards the Conversion of *Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom*, were frustrated by them, and withal denounces against them a greater Severity of Condemnation upon this Account. *I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, and Sodom, in the Day of Judgment, than for you*, ver. 22. 24. This shews plainly that these Men were therefore greater Sinners than those of *Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom*, because these Means had been administered to them in vain. But if these Means could not but have been administered to them in vain (which must needs have been the Case if they were not sufficient for Conversion) then they could not have been greater Sinners upon that Account. For those of *Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom*, must be supposed to have had Means sufficient for Conversion, because otherwise they could not have sinned in not being converted. By consequence to make these Men greater Sinners than those of *Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom*, it must be supposed that they had not only Means sufficient, but more than sufficient, *i. e.* such Means as were of greater Force and Efficacy to work a Reformation.

§. V. To conclude. That the Grace of God, which is given in order to Conversion, may be resisted and rendered ineffectual, is plain from all those Texts of Scripture, which prove that it may be resisted after Conversion is actually wrought. That this latter is possible, is clear from *Ezek. 18. 24.* where we are told, that *when the righteous Man turneth away from his Righteousness, and committeth Iniquity——all his Righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in his Trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his Sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.* So also the Apostle, *Heb. 6. 4, 5, &c.* *It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to Repentance.* Accordingly St. Peter is very careful to advise all Christians to give all Diligence to make their Calling and Election sure (*2 Pet. 1. 10.*) *I will not,* says he, *be negligent to put you in mind of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present Truth; yea, I think it meet, so long as I am in this Tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance,* ver. 12, 13. What reason, think you, could the Apostle have had to have been thus earnest in putting those Men in mind of the Business of their Salvation, who, as he himself says, were already established in the present Truth, *i. e.* in the Religion of the Gospel? Why, he tells you, *Chap. 3. ver. 17.* *Ye therefore, Brethren, seeing ye know these things, beware lest ye being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall away from your own Steadfastness.* To the same purpose St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, that he was jealous over them with a godly Jealousy —— fearing lest by any means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his Subtilty, so their Minds should be corrupted from the Simplicity that is in Christ Jesus, *2 Cor. 11. 2, 3.* And no wonder he was thus mistrustful of others, when though he knew that he was a chosen Vessel of God, he was yet mistrustful of himself; *I keep under my Body,* says he, *and bring it into Subjection, lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away,* *1 Cor. 9. 27.* I might farther argue this Point from those many Exhortations we have to Perseverance, and to watch against the Temptations of the Devil, all which would be very vain and impertinent, were it not possible for Men to fall away from a State of Grace and Salvation. Wherefore since the Grace of God may be resisted after Conversion, 'tis very plain that it may be resisted before; nay, 'tis reasonable to think that the Grace of God may more easily be resisted whilst we are yet to be brought over from a Life of Sin, than when we have for some Time continued in the Practice of Vertue. For, as I have before proved, the Measure of the Divine Grace increases upon us proportionably to our Improvements in Holiness, and consequently we have not so great a Measure of the Spirit at that time when we are first converted, as, if we continue in well doing, we shall receive afterwards. Add to this, that even the same Measure of Grace will be by so much the less liable to be resisted, by how much the greater Progress and Proficiency we have made in our heavenly Calling; because the more accustomed we are to a Life of Holiness, the more cool and moderate shall we be in our Affections towards sensual Pleasures. Wherefore if it be possible for us to resist a greater Measure of God's Grace, when the Temptations we have to sin are less forcible, how much more easily may we resist a lesser Measure, when the Temptations we are under have greater Strength and Power to prevail. It may perhaps be a difficult Matter to account how God should increase the Measure of his Grace in Proportion to Mens Improvements, if it be true that this Grace is absolutely irresistible. For it seems no easy thing to assign any Measure of Grace, which shall be greater than that which works Conversion by an Almighty Power. But be this as it will, I stand by the Scriptures, which tell us plainly, that *to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly;* and let those who contend for this almighty irresistible Operation, see that they be able to reconcile their Doctrine

Arine with this Rule; which if they be found unable to do, even this very thing alone will be sufficient to shew the Falshood of it.

§. VI. It may be thought perhaps that what I have just now insisted upon, viz. That the Grace of God may be resisted after Conversion, is a Point which deserves a larger Discussion; but the Texts which I have produced to prove it, are so very plain, that I think I may safely trust the Sense of them with the most ordinary Reader; and as to those Arguments which are commonly alledged to shew the contrary, I shall find a more proper Opportunity of considering them afterwards. In the mean time I shall venture to draw this Inference from the whole of what has been said, viz. That it is possible for Men to be converted by a less Degree of Power than that which makes it impossible for them not to be converted; and that ordinarily Men may not be converted, when God has done all that is necessary and fitting to be done in order to their Conversion. I say ordinarily; for I know very well that it has been the Opinion of some that † God makes use of “a (w) discriminative “ Grace, by vertue whereof some few of Mankind will be irresistibly saved, “ whilst others are only put into a Capacity for it,” and consequently may be either saved or not saved, according as they shall either employ or neglect those Abilities which God has given them. “I must take Leave to say, that this is “ an Hypothesis as hard to prove as to confute,”* and it may be somewhat harder. For if, as has been shewn, it is not agreeable to the Nature of Mankind that he should be converted irresistibly, this seems to be as good an Argument why none should be so converted, as why all should not be so converted, seeing it will be hard to assign any Case which will make it reasonable for God to act or operate upon Man in such a manner as is not suitable to his Nature. However this be, 'tis nothing to the Question in hand. For the Doctrine which I have been endeavouring to confute is, That Conversion must always be wrought irresistibly, and that it is not possible for Men to be converted otherwise than irresistibly; whereas this Hypothesis allows that Conversion is possible without such an Operation as effects it irresistibly, and accordingly grants this Operation not to all who are converted, but only to some few among them, whom God distinguishes from the rest by this special Favour. I shall conclude this Chapter with those remarkable Words of *Moses, Deut. 30. 19.* which do very fully express the Manner of God's dealing with Mankind, at least in all ordinary Cases. *I call Heaven and Earth to record this Day, that I have set before you Life and Death, Blessing and Cursing: therefore CHUSE Life, that thou and thy Seed may live.*

† Part II.
P. 219.

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(*) *More's Mystery of Godliness*, p. 502.

CHAP. XI.

Some Arguments in favour of the Doctrine of irresistible Grace answered; and first, The Consideration of the State or Condition of Man before Conversion.

* * §. I. **H**AVING in the foregoing Chapters shewn directly and positively that the Operations of the Spirit in Conversion may be resisted and made ineffectual, I proceed now to what I propounded, Thirdly, *viz.* To examine the Force of those Arguments by which the contrary Opinion is endeavoured to be supported.† These Arguments are of various Kinds, but they may all of them be reduced to these three general Heads, *viz.* First, The Consideration of Man's Spiritual State or Condition before his Conversion. Secondly, Some Testimonies of Scripture in which the Doctrine of irresistible Grace is supposed plainly to be asserted. Thirdly, Some evil Consequences which are conceived to follow from the contrary Hypothesis. To each of these I shall speak in order as they follow.

† Part. II.
P. 102.

* §. II. I BEGIN with the first, *viz.* The Consideration of Man's Spiritual State or Condition before his Conversion; and this they suppose to be so miserably (x) corrupted and depraved, that it is utterly impossible for him to be converted otherwise than by an irresistible Operation. This Notion they support principally by certain figurative and metaphorical Expressions, by which the State of the Unconverted, the Converted, and God's Act in converting, are described to us in the Scripture. Thus the Unconverted are said to be *dead in Sin*, in a State of *Blindness*, *Darkness*, and the like. On the contrary, the Converted are said to be *born again*, *created*, *raised from the Dead*, *quickened*, and *enlightened*; God is moreover said to give a *new Heart*, and a *new Spirit*. From whence they infer, that as a Man unborn contributes nothing to his own Generation or Birth, and a Man dead contributes nothing to his own Resurrection, so a Man unconverted contributes nothing to his own Conversion, but all is performed by the sole Act of God, which is no more to be resisted in this Case than it is in any of the other. "Now this Argument must proceed upon
P. 135, 136. "one or other of these two Suppositions, *viz.* Either that it is lawful to argue "from the whole Latitude of these metaphorical Expressions, so as to conclude "every thing true of the Unconverted which may be affirmed of the Dead, "*&c.* Or else that no other reason can be given why the Unconverted are said "to be dead, *&c.* but because a dead Body cannot be restored to Life again "but by an almighty Act." For if we may not argue from the whole Latitude of these Metaphors, and if there are other Respects in which the State of the unconverted does agree with the State of the Dead, *&c.* it is plain then that the Argument drawn from these Expressions will not hold. I shall therefore shew, first, that it is absurd to argue from the whole Latitude of these Metaphors, so as to conclude every thing to be true of the Unconverted, *&c.* which may be affirmed of the Dead, *&c.* Secondly, That there are other Respects, and those very obvious and plain ones, in which the Resemblance be-

(x) Rationes (sc. quod gratia sit irresistibilis) sunt 1^o a parte hominis; quia totali & invicta laborat ad bonum impotentia—quæ modo per *mortem*, modo per *cacitatem*, modo per *cor lapideum*, & similes locutiones exprimitur; quæ ut — vim omnipotentem requirit — ita nihil supponit in homine quo recipere gratiam possit, & ex resistibili efficacem reddat. Quænam enim dispositio in *mortuo* ad *vivendum*, in *cæco* ad *videndum*, in *lapide* ad *sentiendum*, dari potest? — 2^o a parte Dei convertentis; quia eam efficaciam adhibet in hoc opere quæ plane sit insuperabilis, quæ ideo phrasibus *ἐμψυχωτικός*, & quæ vim invictam — importent, describitur; ut quum dicitur homines *creare*, *regenerare*, *resuscitare*, *cor lapideum auferre* & *carneum dare*. Ut ergo *creanti*, *generanti*, *suscitanti*, nemo resistere potest; ita nec Deo hominem convertenti. Ibid. Quæst. 6. §. 8, 9.

tween the Unconverted and the Dead or Blind, and between the Converted and the raised up or enlightned, will justify the Use of these Metaphors, without supposing that Conversion must be wrought by an irresistible Operation. Thirdly, I will shew *ex abundanti* “that the Impossibility of being converted, “otherwise than by an irresistible Operation, cannot be argued from these Expressions, whatever else may be argued from them.

* §. III. FIRST then, I say, it is absurd to argue from the whole Latitude of these Metaphors, so as to conclude every thing to be true of the Unconverted, &c. which may be affirmed of the Dead, &c. For, 1. There are many things true of the Dead, which Fact shews cannot be affirmed of the Unconverted. Thus a dead Man is void of all Sense and Knowledge, whereas an unconverted Man feels oft-times much Remorse of Conscience, and is not without some Knowledge of Spiritual Things. Again, dead Men are supposed to have been once alive, but it is not necessary to suppose of those who are spiritually dead, that they have been once spiritually alive. And there are many other Instances in which the Comparison will not hold. 2. The Diversity of these Metaphors plainly shews that we cannot argue from them in their utmost Latitude. For if because an unconverted Man is said to be dead, we will therefore infer that he does in every respect resemble one that is dead, there will be the same reason why we should infer that he does in every respect resemble those who are blind or in Darkness; and the same reason again why we should conclude that there is a perfect Resemblance between the Converted and those who are created, raised up from the Dead, and enlightned, because the State of the Converted and Unconverted are respectively adumbrated to us by Metaphors, taken from Men under all these Circumstances and Conditions. But that an unconverted Man should in every respect resemble one that is dead, and one that is blind, or in Darkness, and that a converted Man should also in every respect resemble one that is created, raised from the Dead, or enlightened, is impossible, because these several Circumstances or Conditions of Men are all of them in many respects different from one another. There will be no need to produce Instances in so plain a Case. And therefore, 3. If this way of arguing may be allowed, it will very clearly follow that an almighty irresistible Act of the Spirit is not necessary to Conversion. For the Unconverted are said to be asleep, and the Converted awakened. Now 'tis plain that a Man may be awakened out of Sleep without the Application of such a Power as is almighty, or in its own Nature irresistible. Nay, those very Expressions of *Blindness* and *Darkness*, which these Men so much insist upon, will (if we take the same Liberty that they do) prove the direct contrary to what they would advance from them. For if whatever may be affirmed of those who are blind, or in Darkness, may be affirmed of the Unconverted, then because it is sometimes possible to restore a blind Man to Sight, and much more to enlighten a Man in Darkness, without an almighty Act, it will follow that something less than an almighty Power may also be sufficient to bring a Sinner to Conversion.

§. IV. It being plain then that we may not argue from the whole Extent of these Metaphors, so as to conclude that the State of the Converted and Unconverted do respectively bear an exact Resemblance to the State of those who are dead, blind, created, raised up, and the like; we must now see, in the second place, whether there are not some other Respects, and those very obvious and plain ones, in which the Resemblance will justify the Use of these Expressions, without supposing that Conversion must be wrought by an irresistible Operation; and that there are, I think is manifest. For thus: An unconverted Man may be said to be dead, not because he can contribute no more to his own Conversion than a dead Man can to his Resurrection, *i. e.* not because it is absolutely impossible for him to be converted otherwise than

by an almighty Act of God, but because he does not in Fact exert such Actions as are proper to the Spiritual Life, any more than a dead Man exerts such Actions as are proper to the Natural. For the same reason he may be said to be asleep, because there is this Property common both to Death and Sleep, that during the Time of their Continuance there is a Cessation from all natural Actions. He may also be said to be blind, or in Darkness, not because he cannot, but because he does not see, *i. e.* understand and consider such things as are conducive to his Spiritual Interest. On the other hand, the Converted may be said to be raised up, because they do now put forth such Actions as are proper to the Spiritual Life; to be enlightened, because they do now understand and consider such things as are conducive to their Spiritual Interest; to be born again, created, or become new Creatures, because as to their inward Dispositions and outward Conversations they are wholly changed from what they were before. God may also be said to give a new Heart and a new Spirit, because all this is the Effect of his Grace or Assistance. In all these Respects it is plain that there is a very fit Resemblance between the State of the Converted and Unconverted, and the proper Meaning of those Metaphors by which these two different States are respectively described to us. I do not say that the Resemblance ought to be carried no farther; for doubtless as some of these Expressions are used to shew us that our Conversion is owing to the Divine Assistance, so others of them may be used to denote the Greatness of that Corruption, by which this Assistance becomes necessary. But that this Corruption is so great as that we cannot be converted, otherwise than by an almighty Operation, can never be argued merely from the Use of these Metaphors, because there is, you see, resemblance enough to justify the Comparison without such a Supposition; and therefore if it be proved at all, it must be proved from the Scope of those Places where these Metaphors are used, which is what I challenge them to do. In the mean time I will undertake to shew negatively and *ex abundanti*, that the Impossibility of being converted, but by such an Operation of the Spirit as is absolutely irresistible, cannot be argued from these metaphorical Expressions, whatever else may be argued from them, which was my third and last Proposition.

§. V. Now if the Impossibility of being converted, otherwise than by an irresistible Operation, may be argued from any of these Metaphors; that wherein the Unconverted are said to be dead, seems to afford the best Ground for such a Conclusion. † But that it cannot be argued from hence is plain, because as the Unregenerate “are said to be *dead in Sin*, so the Regenerate are said to “be *dead to Sin* (Rom. 6. 2. 8. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 24.) Wherefore if from the “proper Signification of Death it may be concluded that the Unregenerate “can contribute nothing towards their own Conversion, then from the pro- “per Signification of that Word it may also be concluded that the Rege- “nerate cannot sin, nor contribute any thing towards their committing Sin. “But this latter cannot be concluded, therefore not the former.” As great an Absurdity will follow if you argue from those Places where the Regenerate are said to be *born of God* or *enlightened*, “because the Conversion of Sinners is “ascribed to the Ministers of the Gospel under the same Expressions. For “thus saith St. Paul, *In Jesus Christ I have begotten you through the Gospel*, 1 Cor. “4. 15. And of himself he saith, that he was sent to the *Gentiles to open their “Eyes, and to turn them from Darkness to Light*, Acts 26. 18. Wherefore if these “Expressions do imply an almighty irresistible Act in Conversion, then St. “Paul converted the *Gentiles* irresistibly, which, I suppose, is more than these “Men will pretend to affirm. Finally, Whereas God is said to *give a new Heart “and a new Spirit*, ’tis plain that this Phrase does not imply, that the Power by which we are converted must be irresistible, because Men are also exhorted to *cast away from themselves all their Transgressions, and MAKE THEMSELVES a new Heart and a new Spirit*. Ezek. 18. 31. as I shall shew more fully afterwards.

* §. VI.

* §. VI. AND thus much may suffice for an Answer to the Argument drawn from those metaphorical Expressions, by which the State of the Unconverted, Converted, and God's Act in converting, are described to us in the Scriptures. There are besides these some other Texts, in which the State of the Unconverted is literally set forth to us, and which it will not be amiss briefly to mention. † For instance, they alledge that Place of St. Paul, Rom. 8. 7. "*The carnal Mind is Enmity against God; it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can it be.*" To make which Words suit with their Purpose, they must suppose the Sense of them to be either, 1. "That the carnal Mind cannot without an irresistible Act of the Spirit be reconciled to God, and made subject to his Law while it continues to be carnal." Or, 2. "That the Mind which is now carnal, cannot become spiritual and holy afterward but by such an Operation." To suppose the former to be the Sense of the Place, is to make the Apostle speak Nonsense. "For that the Mind should be carnal, and at the same time subject to the Law of God, are Contradictions, and to make Contradictions true does not fall under any Power, and therefore not under Almightyness." And to say the latter, is to say that which the Apostle does not affirm, and which I challenge them to shew can by any good Consequence be concluded from this Text. As little to the purpose is that other Saying of the same Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 14. "*The natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are Foolishness unto him, &c.*" What is to be understood by the *natural Man* I have shewn at large in another place, (i) * and by what has there been said it plainly appears, that this Phrase does not signify barely one who is unconverted; but supposing it were so to be understood, I say, that the same Answer which served for the former Text, will also serve for this. For the Meaning of the Apostle cannot be, that the natural Man, so long as he is natural, cannot receive the Things of the Spirit but by an irresistible Power, because to be a natural Man, and to receive the Things of the Spirit, he declares to be Things incompatible. And that a natural Man cannot become spiritual but by an irresistible Power, he does not assert in these Words, nor can it by any good Consequence be deduced from them. As to what is alledged farther, viz, That the Unconverted are said to be *the Servants of Sin, in Bondage and Captivity to Sin*, and the like, it is scarce worth taking notice of. For it is no where affirmed in Scripture, that the Unconverted are so much the Servants of Sin, as that they are not to be converted but by an almighty irresistible Operation; and that the Necessity of such an Operation cannot be inferred barely from the Use of that Phrase, is plain from hence, that the Converted are also said to be *the Servants of Righteousness*. So that if because the Unconverted are said to be the Servants of Sin, you will infer that they are able to contribute nothing towards their own Conversion; you must also say, that because the Converted are said to be the *Servants of Righteousness*, therefore they are unable to contribute any thing towards their committing Wickedness, which is absurd. †

§. VII. BUT there is one Text in particular which I must not forget, because it is supposed to give us a very sad Account of the State of all Men by Nature. It is that of St. Paul, Eph. 4. 17, 18. where speaking of *the Gentiles*, he says, that "*they walked in the Vanity of their Minds, having the Understanding darkened, being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that is in them, because of the Blindness of their Hearts.*" The Argument from this Place stands thus: That if that State which the Apostle here describes, be natural to all Men before Conversion, then no Man can be converted otherwise than by an almighty Operation of the Holy Ghost working Conversion irresistibly." But to this I answer, 1. That it is here presumed against all Reason, that the

Apostle has here described to us the State of all Men by Nature. For what the Apostle adds presently at Verse 18. viz. "That these Gentiles were *past feeling, and had given themselves over to work all Uncleanness with Greediness*, would strongly tempt a Man to think that he was here describing not what all Men are, but what some Men were, not how bad Men must needs be in a State of Nature, but how degenerate they may grow by Custom in Sin. These Men themselves cannot say that all the Unconverted are past feeling, &c. because this cannot possibly consist with those Convictions," and those Degrees of Reformation, which, as they themselves grant, are often found even in the Unregenerate. And therefore allowing that these Men could not have been converted otherwise than by an almighty Operation of the Spirit, yet this can be no Argument why the same thing should be affirmed of others, who are not in so bad a State as they were. "But, 2. Admitting it were true that the Description here given is that of the State of all Men by Nature." even then it will by no means prove the thing contended for. "For the Apostle does not say either here, or in any part of the Context, that these Men were so degenerate as to be incapable of being wrought upon any other way than by an irresistible Operation, nor is any such thing implied in the metaphorical Expressions of *Darkness, Blindness, &c.*" as I have already proved, nor can it be argued from the Scope of the Apostle in this Place. "For his Purpose was no more than to dissuade the Christians from imitating the Manners of the Heathens: *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye walk not as other Gentiles walk, &c.* This Exhortation he enforceth," 1st, by describing to them more particularly the State or Condition of the Heathen World at that Time, which being so miserably depraved by Idolatry, and all manner of Wickedness, was therefore a very unfit Pattern for their Imitation. And, 2^{dly}, by giving them an Account of their own Condition, "who having been instructed even by the Revelation of the Son of God, they would of all Men be most inexcusable if they should follow such vile Examples: *But ye have not so learned Christ, &c. ver. 20, 21.* The Apostle therefore speaks not one Word about that Power by which Sinners may be converted, nor was it at all needful that he should, because whatever that Power be supposed to be, whether resistible or irresistible, 'tis equally true that such Examples ought not be followed, and the Argument therefore will be equally conclusive.

* * §. VIII. AND thus much for the Argument drawn from the depraved State and Condition of Man before Conversion, which there would have been no need so long to have insisted upon, had it not seemed proper to follow these Men in their own way of Reasoning. For indeed to say that a Man must needs be converted irresistibly or not at all for this reason, because he is by Nature corrupted and depraved, is arrant Nonsense, (2) how great soever that natural Corruption may be supposed to be. The reason is plain, because how

(2) In this Point I have taken the Liberty to differ from my learned Author, who says (*Part. 2. p. 117.*) I deny not that a Man may sin himself into such a desperate State as to need irresistible Grace for his Recovery. If by irresistible Grace were meant simply such an Act or such Acts of the Spirit as operate upon the Mind irresistibly, I should grant not only that some Men may want, but that all Men do want irresistible Grace. For since that is (in this Sense) irresistible which produces any Effect upon the Mind irresistibly, and since it is necessary to suppose that the Spirit does produce some Effect upon the Mind, antecedently to any thing that we are able to do our selves, it is plain that so far ALL Grace may and must be said to be irresistible. But by irresistible Grace these Divines do not mean barely that Grace which operates upon the Mind irresistibly, but that Grace which works Conversion irresistibly; and it was the Necessity of irresistible Grace in this Sense that the Doctor was opposing, when he said that he denied not that a Man might sin himself into such a desperate State as to stand in need of it for his Recovery; which, for my own Part, I must deny, for the Reason assigned above. This Distinction between an irresistible Operation of the Spirit, and an Operation of the Spirit working Conversion irresistibly, is a very material one, and ought indeed to have been taken notice of before, for the avoiding any Mistake that might arise from the promiscuous Use of those Phrases; but having so fully stated the Meaning of the Question at my first setting out, I thought that the Reader would see, without being advertized of it, that when I speak of an almighty irresistible Power or Operation, I would always be understood in the latter Signification.

corrupt soever Mankind is by Nature, God may if he pleases so restore him by Grace, as that it shall be possible for him to be converted, and yet at the same time left to his own Choice whether he will actually be converted or not. 'Tis true that God may also if he pleases deny sufficient Grace to any but those in whom he works Conversion irresistibly, and then indeed if Men be converted at all they must be converted irresistibly. But in this Case 'tis plain that the Argument is not drawn from the Corruption of Man, but from the positive Will and Determination of God, which is a Consideration clearly of another Nature. †

C H A P. XII.

Some Testimonies of Scripture urged in favour of the Doctrine of irresistible Grace considered.

§. I. **T**HE next sort of Arguments are some Testimonies of Scripture, ^{P. 222, to 225.} in which the Doctrine of irresistible Grace is supposed plainly to be asserted; "and these are mostly formed either out of those Places of Scripture, wherein, as they think, the Manner of being converted is expressed in Terms that signify an almighty Operation, or those wherein God is said to *give Faith and Repentance*, &c. Of the first sort of Texts one is that of St. Paul, *Ephes. 1. 19, 20. That you may know what is the exceeding Greatness of his Power towards us who believe, according to the working of his mighty Power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the Dead.* The Argument from this Place is this: That God worketh Faith in the Minds of Men immediately, by the same almighty Power wherewith he raised Christ from the Dead. But this can by no means be proved from the Text. For the Apostle does no where speak of *the exceeding Greatness of God's Power* under the Notion of a Cause why they believed, but of the Greatness of his Power towards those who believed already. And the Meaning seems to be either, 1. That the exceeding Greatness of God's Power was that whereby he still continued to give Testimony to the Truth, answerably to that great Testimony of the Resurrection", to wit, by enabling Believers in those Days to work Miracles. "Or, 2. By the exceeding Greatness of God's Power may be meant that wherewith God would raise them at the last Day, according as he had already raised Christ, the Resurrection of Christ being frequently mentioned, together with the Resurrection of Believers, as the great Argument to support our Faith and Hope. In the former Sense the Apostle prayed that they might know" (*i. e.* be the more confirmed in the Belief of) "the Greatness of God's Power, by being still more plentifully endued with miraculous Gifts; and this Sense is made probable by Verse 17, where he prayeth for some of those Gifts particularly in their Behalf, *viz. that God would give them the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation.* In the latter he prayeth that they might be more and more illuminated with the Knowledge of the Grounds of their Faith, and of the great Rewards which they lived in hopes of; and this Sense seems to be countenanced by Verse 18, where the Apostle prayeth that they *might know what is the Hope of his Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints.* Which of these Meanings is to be preferred I will not say, it were no hard Matter to shew that both of them might be intended, *viz. that the Apostle prayed for their Encrease in the Knowledge of God's Power towards them, both here in this Life, and hereafter at the Resurrection.* But however this Text speaks nothing at all of the Manner whereby God worketh Faith in Men, after he hath afforded them

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“ the Grounds and Means of believing, nor doth the Context lead to any such
 “ Meaning. It speaks of that which is nothing to these Mens Purpose, viz.
 “ the Greatness of God’s Power towards those who believed already, whether
 “ that whereby the Truth was confirmed, or that whereby they themselves
 “ should be raised from the Dead.

P. 185,
 286.

§. II. “ ANOTHER Place produced to this Purpose is that of the same Apostle,
 “ 2. Cor. 4. 6. *God who hath commanded the Light to shine out of Darknes, hath*
 “ *shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in*
 “ *the Face of Jesus Christ.* What they would argue from hence is, that as
 “ it was by an almighty Act that God created the Light, so it is also by an
 “ almighty Act that he illuminates us with the saving Knowledge of the Gos-
 “ pel.” But this is a very strange sort of Inference. For though the Apostle
 does indeed say that the same Person who commanded the Light to shine, &c.
 hath also enlightned our Minds, yet he does not say that he enlightens our
 Minds after the same manner in which he enlightened the World, nor any
 thing like it. The only way therefore of inferring this must be from those me-
 taphorical Expressions of *shining* and *giving Light*; but these, as I have already
 shewn, will afford no Foundation for such a Conclusion, unless no reason can
 be assigned for the Allusion without supposing that God enlightens our Minds
 after the same manner in which he enlightened the World; which cannot be
 pretended. “ For, 1. There is a very obvious Similitude between Light and
 “ Knowledge, in as much as by both we discern Things as they are. 2.
 “ There may be this reason for the Allusion added to the other, that the Be-
 “ nefits of this Knowledge, in their Kind, are as great as those of God’s com-
 “ manding the Light to shine out of Darknes are in theirs. 3. And this
 “ farther reason, that the almighty Power of God was no less shewn, in giv-
 “ ing Testimony to the Truth of the Christian Religion, than in the Creation
 “ of the World. 4. And this (which I conceive to be the principal Reason)
 “ that the *Gentile* World was in a State of deplorable Ignorance, till God cal-
 “ led them by his Gospel; and therefore his bringing them to the Knowledge
 “ of the Truth, was like commanding Light to shine out of Darknes.
 “ These are very likely Reasons for the Allusion,” which doubtless these Men
 might see as well as others, were it not that they are too much Slaves to
 an Hypothesis.

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 Part I.
 P. 295, &
 Part II.
 P. 229.

* §. III. THESE being the principal of the first sort of Texts, I proceed now
 to the second, viz. those wherein God is said to *give* Faith and Repentance;
 from whence their general Conclusion is, that Man is purely passive in the Busi-
 ness of Conversion. But the Weakness of this Plea will be abundantly evi-
 dent from this single Observation, † viz. “ That God is in Scripture fre-
 “ quently said to do those things, for the effecting of which he hath con-
 “ tributed Means sufficient, although the Things themselves do not actu-
 “ ally come to pass. Thus, *Jer. 51. 9. God saith, We have healed Babylon, but*
 “ *she is not healed*; the common Translation, *we would have healed*, being ra-
 “ ther a right Exposition than a Translation of the Text. So *Ezek. 24. 13. Be-*
 “ *cause I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy*
 “ *Filthiness any more.* In like manner God is said to GIVE that, which yet we
 “ may not HAVE, through our own Fault. Thus, in the Words of our Lord,
 “ we pray that God would *give us our daily Bread*, yet we must labour for it;
 “ he may give it therefore, and we through Negligence, want it for all that.
 “ So *John 6. 32, 33, 34. our Saviour told the Jews, My Father giveth you the*
 “ *true Bread from Heaven*, yet they had it not, for they *believed not*, ver. 36.
 “ Thus also the Goodness of God is said to *lead* them to Repentance, who were not
 “ actually led by it, being such as *after their Hardness and impenitent Heart*
 “ *treasured up Wrath unto themselves against the Day of Wrath*, Rom. 2. 4, 5.
 Now if God be said to do those things which are not actually done or effected; if
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he be said to have healed those who were not actually healed; to have purged those who were not actually purged; to have given that which was not actually received; and to have led those, who were not actually led; 'tis plain that it cannot be inferred that God does all himself, and leaves nothing to be done by us, merely from hence, that he is said *to give* Faith, Repentance, and the like, because in all those Instances above mentioned something was wanting necessary to produce the intended Effects, and yet God is said to have done them. The Meaning therefore of these Expressions may possibly be no other than this, *viz.* That God administers to us such Aid or Assistance as, with our own honest Endeavours, will bring us to Faith or Repentance; just as his having healed *Babylon*, and purged *Jerusalem*, denote his having done all that it was proper for him to do in order to those Ends, and which would certainly have accomplished those Ends, had they complied with his gracious Methods. I say, that this may possibly be the Meaning of those Places. "For I do not pretend
 " that these Phrases never signify the actual receiving of the Benefit said to be
 " given; on the contrary I shall shew you presently that sometimes they do.
 " But then I say, that because they do not always imply that Sense, therefore
 " we must not argue one way [or other merely from these Phrases, but find out
 " the Meaning of them from the Circumstances of those Places where they are
 " used." Now by this Issue I am very willing that the present Question should be determined, and therefore I will now bring those Texts which are most principally insisted upon to a particular Examination.

§. IV. THE first I shall consider is that Text of St. Paul, *Philip. 2. 13.* *For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do according to his good Pleasure.* Part. I.
P. 293
294 Now that these Words do not imply that God is the sole Agent in Conversion, is plain from hence, that we are exhorted in the Verse immediately preceding to *work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*; and it is brought as a reason why we ought to do this, because *it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do.* "Now it would be very strange
 " that God should use that for a reason to us why we should work out our
 " own Salvation, which is on the other hand a clear reason why we need
 " not." And yet this is the very Case, if God's working in us be supposed to imply that he is the sole Cause of Conversion. For if God be the sole Cause of Conversion, if he does so much himself, that there is nothing left for us to do, to what purpose is it that we should work? If God worketh not, OUR working will not profit us; and if he doth work, our Negligence, nay, our utmost Resistance, cannot hurt us; for this Work of God is supposed to be irresistible, and consequently incapable of being frustrated by the stoutest Opposition we are able to make against it. This Consideration therefore, that God worketh in us, can (upon this Supposition) be no Argument why any Man should himself work, but a plain Argument to the contrary; and therefore the Apostle would never have used it, "much less would he have added *with Fear and Trembling*;
 " for there can be no Cause of Fear and Trembling, if we cannot miscarry
 " through our own Negligence," which, if God be the sole Cause of Conversion, we certainly cannot. But it will be enough to expose this Notion, nakedly to set down "the Apostle's Discourse as it must run according to this Interpretation." Thus then he argues: "I assure you all to whom I write, that
 " God worketh in you all things that appertain to your Obedience and Salvation, and that by an irresistible Operation, so as it shall not be possible for
 " you not to will, or to do whatever is necessary to Salvation. Therefore I
 " seriously exhort you to be very careful, even with Fear and Trembling, that
 " ye both will and do such things, lest you miscarry through your own Negligence and Disobedience. Than which nothing can be more absurd!" It is plain then that by *God's working in us* no more can be meant, than that he worketh in us what is on his Part proper and fitting to be wrought, in order to our willing and doing; which is not so much but that our own Care and Diligence

Diligence is still necessary. And this will fully justify the Apostle's Inference, viz. that we ought to work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling; for as, if we do not work, we shall certainly miscarry, notwithstanding God's working in us; so this very Consideration, that God worketh in us, will very much aggravate the Guilt of Impenitency, because where the Means themselves have been greater, the Sin of neglecting them must be greater likewise.

P. 297, &
Part II.
P. 228, to
230.

§. V. THE next principal Place they alledge is that of the Prophet Ezek. 36. 26. "*A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony Heart out of your Flesh, and will give you an Heart of Flesh, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments, and do them.*" But that the Meaning of this Promise was not that God would do all himself, and leave nothing for them to do, is plain, because (as I have before observed) these Men were required to make THEMSELVES a new Heart and a new Spirit. "From whence it is evident, that notwithstanding God's giving them a new Heart, it was necessary for them to renew their own Hearts; and what can this signify but that the Promise was not absolute, but supposed the Concurrence of their own Endeavours; or else if it were absolute, that the Meaning of it was no more than this, viz. that God would do every thing that was proper to be done on his Part to bring them to Repentance, leaving it still to their own Choice whether they would actually repent or not? * And whereas it is objected, that (a) this Command shews what Man ought to do, not what of himself he can do; and again, that since this Command was directed to those who were already called, they could not be commanded to make themselves a new Heart so much in the beginning of Conversion as in the Progress of it, by the Study of Holiness and Repentance; and farther, that we are commanded to have a spiritual Understanding, and ardent Affections after spiritual good things, when yet these are supposed to be inspired into us irresistibly by the Spirit; all this, I say, is ridiculous. For, 1. We do not say that the Command to make our selves a new Heart, shews what we are able to do of our selves. We acknowledge it is by God's Grace that we are enabled to make our selves new Hearts, and this I grant is very fitly and very fully signified to us by God's promising that he will do it for us. But then I say, that as on the one hand this Promise of God plainly shews that his Grace is necessary towards our having a new Heart and a new Spirit, so on the other hand his commanding us to make our selves a new Heart and a new Spirit does as plainly shew that our own Endeavours are necessary likewise, because there can be no Sense in God's commanding us to do that which he himself resolves to do alone, by such a Power as we shall not be able to resist. Wherefore to say, that what is promised as the Gift of God, is also commanded as the Duty of Man; that the Command shews what is Man's Duty, and the Promise from whence he ought to expect that which he cannot have from himself, is only amusing us with the Sound of Words, which have no manner of relation to the Difficulty to be removed. 2. The next Part of the Reply is every whit as impertinent as the former. The Jews, say they, were not commanded to make themselves a new Heart SO MUCH in the BEGINNING of Conversion, AS in the PROGRESS of it. But, 1. If, as they say, Conversion be wrought all at once by an immediate Act of the Spirit, it will be no easy Matter to distinguish between the Beginning and the End of it; and it is Nonsense to talk of a Progression in that which is instantaneous. 2. To say that the Jews were not commanded to make themselves a new Heart

(a) Frustra reponitur — cordis dationem præcipi, Ezek. 18. 31. Quia præcipitur ut officium hominis, quod promittitur ut beneficium Dei; per præceptum significatur quid homo debeat, per promissionem, unde expectare debeat quod ex se habere nequit. Adde quod cum tale præceptum dirigatur ad jam vocatos, non tam jubentur cor sibi novum facere in conversionis initio, quam in progressu per studium sanctificationis & penitentiae. Denique — Deus jubet etiam ut intellectum habeamus spiritualem, & affectus accensos ad bona spiritualia, & tamen volunt (sc. Adversarii) a Deo irresistibili modo nobis inspirari. Turretin, Loc. cit. Quæst. 6 §. 14.

so much in the beginning of Conversion as in the Progress of it, is to suppose that they were commanded in some degree to renew their own Hearts even in the beginning; and this, for ought I know, may be enough for our Purpose.

3. They give us no good reason to believe that the *Jews* were not commanded to make themselves a new Heart so much in the beginning of Conversion, as in the Progress of it. All that is pretended is, that *the Command was directed to those who were already called*. But if they were already called, it does not follow that they had so much as begun the Work of Repentance, because they might have neglected these Calls; as, in a great measure at least, it is plain they had. For, 4. However this was, 'tis very manifest that as yet they had not made themselves a new Heart, because if they had, there would have been no manner of occasion to have commanded them to have done it. Now it signifies no great matter whether you suppose that this Work was not as yet begun, or whether you suppose that it was begun, and something only was wanting for the compleating and perfecting of it. Still they were commanded to make themselves a new Heart, and it is all one whether their own Endeavours were necessary in the beginning or at any time afterwards, if (as this Command manifestly supposes) they were at all necessary. Finally, Whereas it is pretended that *we are commanded to have spiritual Understanding, and ardent Affections after spiritual good things, when yet these are supposed to be inspired into us irresistibly by the Spirit*; this in part I grant, and in part I deny. I grant that we are commanded to have spiritual Understanding, and ardent Affections after spiritual good things; but I deny that we suppose these Gifts to be inspired into us irresistibly by the Holy Ghost, *i. e.* so as that no Endeavours of ours are necessary towards the procuring them for our selves. On the contrary, though we confess that Knowledge, and all Christian Graces and Vertues which we attain unto, are the Gifts of God, yet we suppose and maintain that Means are to be used on our Part, to qualify us both for the Reception of them at first, and the Continuance of them afterwards, which if we fail in, these Gifts will fail us too; and that this is the only good Reason that can be assigned why we are commanded to have them.

§. VI. I KNOW not whether the Reader will forgive me for staying so long upon such Trifles as these; but the Argument I am now upon being decisive in its Kind, I was willing just to give him a Sight of what one of the most noted Advocates for irresistible Grace has alledged against it. And now I will beg Leave to make two Observations, which, I think, will determine the Sense of the Text in dispute beyond all Contradiction.† The first is, That what GOD here promised to do for the People of *Israel*, he declares in effect might not yet actually be done for them, as you may find, *Ezek. 11. 19, 20, 21.* where this Promise being set down in these Words, "*I will put a new Spirit into them, and I will take the stony Heart out of their Flesh, and will give them an Heart of Flesh, that they may walk in my Statutes,*" &c. It presently follows, "*But as for them whose Heart walketh after their detestable Things, and their Abominations, I will recompence their Way upon their own Heads, saith the Lord God.*" This plainly shews, that notwithstanding God's giving them a new Heart and a new Spirit, they might still walk after their Abominations; and consequently that the Meaning of the Promise cannot be that God would do all himself that was necessary to be done to bring them to Conversion; for had this been the Case, they must then have been converted, and consequently it would have been absurd to have supposed that any of them should have walked in their Abominations. The Meaning therefore can be no other than this, that God would abundantly supply them with the Assistance of his Grace, yet so as to leave it to depend upon their own Endeavours, in the Use of the Means vouchsafed them, whether they should actually be converted or not. My next Observation is, That even this Promise was not absolute, but conditional, as appears from *Ezek. 36. 37.* where to the foregoing Promises (whereof that of giving a

† Ibid.

new Heart, &c. is one) this Condition is added: *Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the House of Israel to do it for them.* From whence it is plain that something was to be done on their Parts, in order to give them a Claim or Title to these Promises.

Part II.
P. 233,
234.

§. VII. THE only Place besides that is worth taking notice of, is that of *Moses, Deut. 29. 4.* "*The Lord hath not given you an Heart to perceive, and Eyes to see, and Ears to hear, unto this Day.*" But it is plain from the Context that the Reason intended in this Place why they did not perceive, was not because they wanted that Grace which was necessary to enable them to perceive, but because of their own Perverseness, who might have perceived, and would not. For thus *Moses* upbraids their Obstinacy, *Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your Eyes in the Land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his Servants, and unto all his Land, the great Temptations which thine Eyes have seen, the Signs of those great Miracles, yet the Lord hath not given you an Heart to perceive, &c.* Nothing seems plainer than that *Moses* designed to expostulate with the *Israelites* about their unreasonable Unbelief, and so lays before them the Inexcusableness of their Murmuring and Disobedience; and it is evident that the Emphasis of the Expostulation lies in those very Words, *yet the Lord hath not given thee an Heart to perceive.* As if he had said, This is a marvellous thing that the Lord hath given you all this Cause to perceive, and to know him, to trust in him, and to obey him, and yet that *he hath not given you an Heart to do this.* But now if by those Words, *God hath not given you an Heart, &c.* *Moses* had intended to signify to them, that the Lord had not yet bestowed upon them that Grace which was necessary to enable them to perceive, then instead of aggravating their Disobedience, which was his Design, he had made the most reasonable Apology for it that they could desire. For if hitherto it had been always impossible for them to perceive, why should their Dulness be blamed? Or what Wonder was it that they had not done that, to the doing whereof God had never as yet given them sufficient Abilities? * The Sense of the Place therefore must necessarily be this: That notwithstanding God had done so much for them, as that it was not only possible for them to perceive, but even a marvellous thing if they should not, yet all this while they did not perceive, *i. e.* they did not consider and lay to Heart those Instances of the Divine Power and Mercy towards them, so as thereby to be wrought up to a firm Reliance and Dependance upon him. So that the Phrase of God's *not given them a Heart* is here used not to denote any thing which was necessary on his Part to be done, and yet was not done, but to signify the Effect or Consequent of what he had done for that People, which because it did not answer in the Event, he is therefore said not to have done it; in like manner as if I should speak to a Man about something, and he should stop his Ears, and refuse to hear me, it might truly be said that I did not inform him; or if I should instruct another in some Science, who would just hear my Instructions, but would take no Pains to understand them, it might truly be said that I did not instruct him: though with respect to what was done by me in both Cases, it might on the other hand be as truly said, that in the one I did inform, and in the other I did instruct, because I did all that was possible to be done on my Part in order to those Purposes. This will be yet more plain if it be considered, 1. That the Phrase of God's *giving* is sometimes used in Scripture precisely to denote the Effect or Consequent, *i. e.* the actual receiving of the Benefit said to be given. An Instance of this sort we have, *2 Tim. 2. 25.* where *St. Paul* exhorts *Timothy* in Meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves, "*if peradventure God will give them Repentance*" to the Acknowledgement of the Truth, *i. e.* if they will repent. 2. That unless this Place be thus interpreted, there will be no possible way of reconciling it with that of the Prophet *Ezek. 12. 2.* where speaking of the *Israelites* (who to be sure were not under greater Advantages then, than they were in the Days

Days

Days of *Moses*) he says that they *had Eyes to see, and Ears to hear*. The Meaning of which Words I have before shewn to be, that the *Israelites* had all those Means vouchsafed them which were necessary to bring them to Repentance; so that if by God's *not having given them Eyes to see, and Ears to hear*, in the other Place, you will understand, that God had not vouchsafed them all necessary Means, *Moses* and *the Prophet* will be made plainly to contradict one another. But if the Interpretation which has now been given be admitted of, then these two Places will be perfectly consistent the one with the other. For it is certain that in two different Senses, or under two different Respects, it may truly be affirmed of the same Persons at the same time, that they have Eyes, and that they have not Eyes. So that if you suppose that *Ezekiel* spoke with respect to the Means, and *Moses* with respect to the Event or Issue, there will then be no Contradiction at all between them. †

§. VIII. "THIS is all I shall say to those Testimonies of Scripture which are produced to support the Doctrine of irresistible Grace; for those which I have not directly answered are parallel to some that I have."* And from the whole I think the Truth appears to be this, that Man is indeed passive, but not merely passive in the Work of Conversion. For if Man were not at all passive, it could not be said of GOD, that he *worketh in us both to will and to do*, that he *gives us a new Heart, a new Spirit*, and the like; and if Man were merely passive, *i. e.* if he were not at all the Cause of his own Conversion, it would be absurd to exhort him *to work out his own Salvation, to make himself a new Heart and a new Spirit*. Wherefore there is no other way to make the Scriptures consistent with themselves, but by saying that Conversion is the Work of God and of Man too. That GOD does indeed help or assist us by the Influence of his holy Spirit; but that this Influence is not so great, but that our own sincere and honest Endeavours are necessary likewise; so that if we fail on our Parts, all those Means which God administers will thereby be rendered fruitless and ineffectual. †

CHAP. XIII.

Of the Evil Consequences which are supposed to follow from maintaining the Grace of God to be resistible; and first, that it ascribes the Glory of Conversion to our selves.

§. I. **W**E are now come to the Third and last Kind of Arguments, which are brought to prove that Conversion is wrought by an irresistible Operation of the Spirit, *viz.* such as are founded upon some dangerous Consequences, which 'tis pretended will follow from the contrary Opinion. "This way of arguing I must acknowledge to be very reasonable, and when it is managed with Strength and Clearness, it will at least reduce an Adversary to Temper and Moderation, if not quite satisfy him. The Consequences of an Opinion may be so bad, that this may be a good Reason to reject it without any further Consideration; and when they are not as bad as can be, they may reasonably put a Man upon examining his Grounds over again."* But for my part, I can see no ill Consequences that can follow from asserting that the Grace of God may be resisted, or that Conversion is as well the Effect of our own Free-will, as of the Spirit's Operations; though I can see, and have, I hope, already made it appear, that there are many ill Consequences, and those dangerous ones, that will follow from supposing that God worketh Conversion

in all Men irresistibly. It is not very easy to think of a Consequence that strikes deeper at the Foundation of Religion and Piety than this, *viz.* That a Man's own Endeavours signify nothing at all towards the making him good; and yet this Consequence, together with some others almost as bad, has been demonstrated directly to follow from the Doctrine of irresistible Grace. Wherefore, these Men should in Modesty forbear to charge others with the evil Consequences of their Opinions, till they have removed those which their own Opinions are, in the Judgments of others, justly chargeable with. However, we will see what they have to alledge against us in this way of arguing, †

P. 178.

§. II. AND first they alledge, That if the Holy Ghost doth not work Conversion irresistibly, then the Glory of our Conversion is to be ascribed to our selves, and not to the Grace of God. "The Meaning of which Objection must be either 1st. That whereas we ought to give the whole Glory of our Conversion to God, we must in consequence from our Principles, take it all to our selves. Or 2^{dly}, That we must rob God of that Glory which is due to him, by taking only a Part of it to our selves. This Objection, because it carries with it a great Shew of Piety, I shall therefore consider very carefully. First, With reference to the former Part of it, concerning ascribing the whole Glory of our Conversion to our selves. And then Secondly, With reference to the latter, *viz.* of not ascribing the whole to God.

P. 179, to 184.

§. III. FIRST then I say, 'tis no consequence from our Principles, that we must ascribe the whole Glory of Conversion to our selves, and none to the Grace of God. "For 1st. We do in great Part ascribe Conversion to the Grace of God, merely upon this Account, *viz.* Because we say and believe that it is truly and properly the Effect of God's Word revealed to us in the Gospel. That the Gospel is very frequently in the New Testament stiled *the Grace of God* every one knows; and to say that Conversion is truly and properly the Effect of this Grace, will not, I suppose, be thought inconsistent with affirming that the Operations of the Spirit may be resisted. Wherefore, it cannot with any Shew of Reason be pretended, that we must in consequence of our Principles ascribe the whole Glory of Conversion to our selves, since "if Conversion were the Effect of no other Grace than that of the Revelation of the Gospel, we might reasonably, and ought humbly, to ascribe it incomparably more to the Grace of God, and to say, *Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but to thy Name be the Glory given.* I doubt not but *Pelagius* and his Follower were greatly mistaken, in making all the Grace which God affords towards our Conversion, to consist, as they phrased it, *in Lege & Evangelio*, or in the Revelation of Divine Truth. But I must needs say that their Adversaries seemed not to have any just Ground from hence, to charge them with ascribing the Glory of well-doing wholly to themselves. It is enough of all reason to exclude boasting, that our Obedience proceeds from Faith, or from our Belief of that Covenant of Grace, which was ratified by the Sacrifice of Christ's Death, and the Purpose whereof flowed from the mere Grace and Mercy of Almighty God." For where the very Foundation of Obedience is owing to Grace, there Obedience itself must be owing to Grace likewise. And therefore, "unless we had been able to have procured a Sacrifice for the Expiation of our past Offences; unless we could have offered to God valuable Considerations, why he should enter into a Covenant of Mercy with us, unless we could satisfy his Honour and Holiness, and repair the Wrongs which we had offer'd to his Authority, and Dominion, and redeem our selves out of the Hands of his offended Justice; though we should not only equal, but excel the Virtue and Piety of *St. Paul*, who could *do all things*; yet with him also we must acknowledge that it is *through Christ who strengthens us.*" This will still be more evident if we consider more particularly the Nature of those Motives and Inducements to Obedience, which God hath set before us in his

his Word, "which are such, that we cannot with any Modesty impute our
 " best Performances in Religion to our own Glory. There is no Proportion
 " between the utmost that Man can do in the Service of God, and those Rea-
 " sons wherewith God has excited him thereunto, as may be sufficiently proved
 " by one single Instance, *viz.* that of Eternal Life. Now whoever offers to
 " another a Reason hitherto unknown, which being rightly considered, will
 " determine him to do some good thing which is required of him, ought to
 " be allowed at least some share of the Praise which belongs to the Action.
 " But if that Reason be the Proposal of so vast a Reward as incomparably ex-
 " ceeds the Service, he that performs the Service has no reason to think highly
 " of himself at all; he may applaud his own Happiness; he cannot magnify
 " his own Vertue. If an earthly Kingdom were promised to a debauched Liver
 " on Condition of one Week's Sobriety, would any Man think that his Ab-
 " stinence, to which he had been perswaded by so vast a Recompence, de-
 " served much Commendation? But although there is some Proportion be-
 " tween a few Days and a Man's Life, yet between all the Kingdoms of the
 " World, and the Glory of them on one side, and between an Inheritance in
 " the Kingdom of God on the other, there is no more Proportion than be-
 " tween Vanity and Perfection, than between a Moment and Eternity. Is it
 " not plain therefore that whatsoever we do in God's Service, is to be im-
 " puted to the Praise and Glory of his Grace, who hath incited us thereunto by
 " so free, so gracious, and so rich a Promise as that of Life everlasting in his
 " Kingdom?

§. IV. "BUT for the better Illustration of this Argument, let us consider ^{P. 184. to}
 " those Words of St. Paul, 2 Cor. 4. 17. *Our Light Affliction which is but for a* ^{187.}
 " *Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.* In the
 " first place, I think it will not be denied, that suffering meekly and constant-
 " ly for the Sake of Truth and Goodness, is the best Service we can offer to
 " God. St. Peter plainly tells us, that *this is Thank-worthy, if a Man for Conscience*
 " *towards God endure Grief, suffering wrongfully,* 1 Pet. 2. 19. So that if any Praise
 " can be claimed to our selves, it should seem to be most rightfully due upon
 " the Obedience of meek suffering for the Truth. Again, it is observable, that
 " those Afflictions which the Apostle underwent were very great in them-
 " selves, and of long Continuance with respect to the time of Man's Life; so
 " that he might reasonably challenge as much Thanks and Praise of this Kind,
 " or perhaps more, than any mere Man ever could. Witness what he himself
 " says, 2 Cor. 11. 23. *In Labours I am more abundant, in Stripes above measure,*
 " *in Prisons more frequent, in Deaths often, &c.* This certainly is a Description
 " of Afflictions long and heavy, both in Weight and Number; and bearing
 " them as we ought is such an Argument of Piety, that the Apostle might well
 " say, *If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern my Infirmities,* v.
 " 30. And if a Christian may glory in any thing, it is in this. Yet in this
 " very Epistle he calls this Affliction light, and accounts it to be *but for a Mo-*
 " *ment,* and the Reason why he doth so, is contained in the following Words,
 " *viz.* that *it worketh a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.* Now first;
 " it is no great matter to bear a light Affliction; much less to bear that which
 " is of no long Continuance; least of all if it endures but for a Moment. No
 " Man can challenge Praise or Thanks for so slight a thing. Wherefore Se-
 " condly, if Afflictions otherwise heavy and long, are rendred light and mo-
 " mentary, by the Promise of a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of
 " Glory, then the Praise of bearing such Afflictions is incomparably more due
 " to him that made the Promise, than to him that is supported by it, because
 " to the latter they are but light and momentary, and 'tis the gracious
 " Promise of the former that hath made them so, though in themselves they
 " are considerably long and grievous. And therefore St. Paul could not
 " reckon up the Afflictions he had gone through for the Sake of the Gospel,

“ without a modest Regret, and seeming to himself to have done foolishly. *I*
 “ *am become a Fool in glorying. ye have compelled me,* Chap. 12. v. 11. They had
 “ compelled him to it who undervalued him, and to their own Harm preferred
 “ others before him. *I am,* says he, *in nothing behind the very chiefest of the A-*
 “ *postles,* yet he remembred withal, that he ought to abase himself before God,
 “ and therefore he adds, *though I am nothing, i. e.* have merited no Thanks
 “ from God for all that I have done or suffered. In a Word, when upon
 “ good Reason he was forced to compare himself with other Men, he re-
 “ presented his Afflictions to have been very great, as in truth they were;
 “ but when he compared them with the promised Rewards of Patience, he re-
 “ presents them to be light and momentary, as indeed they were also; and
 “ therefore though he ought to have been commended by the Church of
 “ *Corinth* for the former Reason, yet he would not pretend to be any thing
 “ before God for the latter.

P. 187,
188.

“ §. V. SEEING then that the Promise of eternal Life and Happiness cutteth
 “ off all Pretence of glorying before God, when for his Sake we suffer
 “ the sharpest Persecutions, much more will it make the Praise of all other
 “ Acts of Obedience, as not being so difficult, become due to him in the first
 “ place, who hath by the Offer of such inestimable Rewards, induced us there-
 “ unto. And since likewise this Motive is of it self sufficient for this Purpose,
 “ how much more will it make the Praise of our good Actions due to God,
 “ when it is considered as implying the Forgiveness of our Sins; as made to
 “ Wretches obnoxious to God's angry Justice; as enforced by the Threatnings
 “ of Endless Punishments; as including Salvation from those Punishments.
 “ Finally, as joined with so many other Inducements to Obedience? For in-
 “ stance, with God's sending his only Son to call us to Repentance; with the
 “ mean Condition to which he stooped, and the bitter Sufferings which he
 “ underwent for our Sakes; with that excellent Example he hath set before us;
 “ with those affectionate Exhortations, Expostulations, and Intreaties, whereby
 “ God in his Word hath expressed the Tenderness of his Love towards us.
 “ Lastly, with those abundant Testimonies whereby God hath so plentifully as-
 “ sured us that he hath indeed spoken to us by his Son. I say, the Promise of
 “ eternal Life, joined with these and many more Inducements to Obedience,
 “ all of them very strong and persuading, every one whereof is made known
 “ to us in the Word of God, and every one the Effect of his free Grace, of
 “ his unsought, undeserved good Will and Pleasure, doth yet more evidently
 “ make the Glory of our Conversion become due to God in the first place, of
 “ whose Grace it is that we are thus persuaded. Wherefore we that believe
 “ Conversion to be effected in us by the Power of God's Word, and the Mo-
 “ tives to Obedience contained in the Gospel, cannot with any Justice be charged
 “ with ascribing the whole Glory of it to our selves, since no Man of ordina-
 “ ry Apprehension can ascribe Conversion to God's Word, but he must under-
 “ stand that he thereby doth in great part ascribe the Glory of it to God by
 “ whose Word he is converted.

P. 190:

“ §. VI. WHAT I have hitherto said, must not be so interpreted as if I thought
 “ that the bare Proposal of these Motives in the holy Scripture, or by the Ministry
 “ of Men, is of it self sufficient for Conversion. For all that I affirm, is that if
 “ this were sufficient, the Glory of Conversion ought still to be ascribed chiefly
 “ unto God, and consequently, we who acknowledge Conversion to be the
 “ Effect of God's Word, as one Cause or Means of it, are for this reason, un-
 “ justly charged with giving the whole Glory of Conversion to our selves.”
 “ But to prevent all mistakes of this Nature, and to shew further how little Force
 “ there is in this Objection, I add, “ 2dly, That we do moreover ascribe Conver-
 “ sion to the internal Operations of the holy Spirit, applying the Motives of
 “ Religion to our Minds, and with them persuading us to be converted. That

we

“ we are enlightened with the Knowledge of Christ, cometh of his Gift, who
 “ disposeth us to learn the Truth. That we attend to the Word of God; that
 “ we are wrought into a serious and considerate Temper; that we are excited
 “ to good Resolutions; that we are confirmed in them; that we find Pleasure
 “ in the Performance of our Duty; that we are gradually led on to every good
 “ Work, cometh of his Grace, who by his insensible Operations, putteth good
 “ Thoughts into our Minds, representeth Divine Truths more clearly to our
 “ Understandings, and thereby moveth our Wills and Affections more power-
 “ fully, than we are able to do of our selves. If therefore the external Reve-
 “ lation of Divine Truths, though it were all the Grace of God towards us,
 “ had made it our Duty to give to him the Glory” of our Conversion, much
 more ought that Glory to be ascribed to him, when these external Motives
 are inwardly applied to our Minds, by the secret Influences of the Divine
 Spirit.

§. VII. FINALLY, we do not ascribe the whole Glory of Conversion to our
 selves, because we do acknowledge that there is a Variety “ of other Means”
 besides these which have been already mentioned, “ whereby God traineth us
 “ up to his Fear, and leads us to Repentance; I mean the innumerable Ways
 “ of his wise and good Providence towards us, whereby we are prepared for
 “ Instruction, awakened to Attention, disposed to Consideration, admonished
 “ of our Sins, and quickened in the Performance of our Duty. To this kind
 “ of Grace it is that we are to ascribe the Benefits of good Education, of reli-
 “ gious Friends and Companions, of an honest Calling and Employment, and
 “ of every Passage in our Conversation with others, from which we might
 “ reap Instruction. Hereto belongs the Disposal of our outward Condition in
 “ any respect; as for instance, when God is pleased either to prove our Thank-
 “ fulness and Ingenuity by the Comforts of this Life, or to check our Wanton-
 “ ness by sending us seasonable Correction, to make us more tractable by soft-
 “ ning us upon the Bed of Sickness, and then to try what Use we have made
 “ of such Warnings, by giving us time to perform our Promises of new Obe-
 “ dience. To conclude, every Dispensation of God’s Providence towards us,
 “ who in his Wisdom knows what is best for every one of us, is God’s Grace.
 “ To which if we add the Consideration of his Patience in bearing so long
 “ with us, and still waiting for our Amendment, while he importuneth us by
 “ the Ministry of his Word, while he solliciteth us by the Motions of his good
 “ Spirit, while he instructeth and admonisheth us by the Variety of his Provi-
 “ dences (for even this Forbearance is *Goodness leading us to Repentance*, as the
 “ Apostle says, *Rom. 2. 4.*) If, I say, we lay together all these Methods of
 “ God’s Grace towards us in order to our spiritual Welfare, we bereave our
 “ selves of all Pretence to boast of any thing that is good in us. And concern-
 “ ing all these Instances of God’s Grace, it is plain that they are consistent
 “ with that *Liberty* in Man, which maketh the Good or Evil that we do, to
 “ become our own free Actions, and the Effect of our own Choice.

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194.

§. VIII. AND thus much may suffice to have been spoken in Answer to the
 first Part of the Consequence, which the Patrons of irresistible Grace would
 fasten upon our Doctrine, *viz.* “ That it ascribes the whole Glory of Conversion
 “ to our selves; I come now to the Second, *viz.* that it does not ascribe the
 “ whole Glory thereof unto God. The meaning of which objection if it be
 “ this, That our Opinion makes some Praise to belong to the Convert” we
 own the Consequence and challenge them to shew a Reason why we ought to
 be afraid of it. “Tis certain that our Saviour and his Apostles often commended
 “ the good Actions of Men; and God will at the last day say to the Righteous
 “ *well done thou good and faithful Servant.* Therefore he who repents him of
 “ his evil Ways and does that which is right in the sight of God is commen-
 “ dable,” *i. e.* some praise belongs to him “ for God does not judge of Things

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“and Persons otherwise than they are.” But though our Opinion gives some praise to the Convert, yet it is so little that in a loose and comparative way of speaking, it may well enough be said to be none at all. After this sort the Apostle speaks “1 Cor. 15. 10. *I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the Grace of God which was in me.*” How could St. Paul say truly that he laboured, if he had not laboured? And why did he say also that he did not labour, but because the Grace of God had done so much for him, that in Comparison he had done nothing at all? That which the Apostle had done, being simply consider’d, was what the *Corinthians* ought to have commended him for, as he himself said. But in respect of the Grace of God which was with him, he was nothing, and no Commendation was due to him, *i. e.* (not absolutely, but) comparatively none at all. Where any thing is effected by some principal and over-ruling Cause, that hath a far greater Influence than any of the rest, it is usual to ascribe the Effect to that Cause, as if none else had contributed towards it. ’Tis the General that gains the Victory; the Magistrate that secures the Peace; the Architect that builds the House: Yet something is done by the Soldiers, Officers, and under Labourers. But these Similitudes do not come up to the Case in hand, and it is not easy to find one that will. There is in all these and the like Instances some Proportion between the principal and less principal Causes; but there is no Proportion between what God does on our side, and we on the other. His Grace is incomparably more effectual than our Work, and therefore when his Glory is shewn, the Glory of Man vanisheth into nothing, as the Starlight disappears when the Sun is present. This I look upon to be the main Reason why in our Conversion God is said to *create*, and *raise from the Dead*, although also it is sometimes said of us, that we *convert* and *save our selves*, viz. because our Part in it is as nothing to his, and, comparatively speaking, the whole Effect is produced by him alone.” But yet still it is something that we do. For we are said in Scripture to *repent* and *turn to God*; and the Ministers of God’s Word are said to *convert Sinners*, to be *Workers together with God*, to *save themselves, and those that hear them*. “So that, even the Scriptures themselves do not in Strictness of Speech ascribe all the Glory of our Conversion to God. Are these Expressions injurious to God’s Grace? We say no more than what these plainly imply.

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§. IX. BUT here is an Objection in the way, which must be removed, and that is this: “That upon this Supposition (*b*) that which LEAST conduceth to Man’s Salvation is attributed to GOD; and that which conduceth MOST is ascribed to MAN HIMSELF. For (say they) it is more to believe and repent, than ’tis to have power to believe and repent; because the Promise of Life and Salvation is not made to him that is enabled to believe, but to him that does believe and obey the Gospel. But according to us (we are told) the Power only which we have to believe and repent is from God, but the Act from our selves; therefore we ascribe less to God than to Man, and by consequence attribute more Glory to our selves than to God. Now to this I answer, 1. That ’tis Nonsense to say that the Power which we have to believe and repent is from God, and at the same time to say that the Act of Conversion is from our selves, *i. e.* from our selves only. For the Act of Conversion proceeds from the Power, and consequently if God gives the Power, ’tis not merely of our selves that we are

(b) Si gratia operatur resistibiliter in nobis, ita ut positum sit penes liberum hominis arbitrium, vel ea uti, vel resistere; sequitur plus in conversione tribui hominis arbitrio quam Deo. — Nam si post omnes gratiae operationes hominis voluntas in æquilibrio relinquitur, necessario sequitur, non Deum per gratiam sed hominem per liberum arbitrium esse principalem causam fidei & conversionis, & conferre quod majus est; Deo, quod minus est, conferente. *Id. Ibid. §. 17.*

actually converted, but partly also by that Power which we receive from God. Since then, as is plain, and the Argument supposes, we do maintain that it is by God's Grace that we are enabled to believe and repent, 'tis false and absurd to say that we ascribe the Act of Conversion wholly to our selves. Wherefore, 2. The Meaning of this Objection, to make Sense of it, must be this: "That we suppose the Act of Conversion to be so much from our selves, that it depends upon the Use of our own Liberty." Which indeed is very true; but then I deny that it follows from hence that Man contributes more to his own Conversion than God; for this Conclusion is "grounded upon a most false Proposition, viz. That that Cause, without which the Effect cannot be produced, is always the principal Cause; whereas nothing can be more plain, than that many Causes may be necessary for the producing of an Effect, and yet one of them may contribute more towards it than all the rest put together. — But any Body may be made sensible of the pitiful Sophistry of this Argument by this plain Instance. Two Persons are guilty of Treason by the Sentence of the Law; the Prince offers a Pardon to both, and understanding they are both likely to refuse it, sends fit Persons to both to convince and persuade them; the one is persuaded, and accepts, the other dies in his Obstinacy; I ask now, doth he that is persuaded to accept the Pardon contribute so much to the saving of his own Life, as in the least to derogate from the Grace and Mercy of his Prince? And were he not a senseless and ungrateful Wretch, that for this reason should ascribe all or the most to himself, and little or nothing at all to his Prince's Goodness and Clemency? Not in the least, "if this Argument from the Power and the Act be good for any thing. For the Prince did no more than put it into his Power to save his own Life, and use proper Means to persuade him, but the saving of his Life was at last his own Act. Away with these metaphysical Subtilties, they are against common Sense! But is not the Act more than the Power? Yes, and so it must needs be if it includes the Power, as it always does. But in plain English, Who dischargeth my Debt, he that gives me the Money, or I that accept it, and tell it out to the Creditor? He gives the Power, I do the Act. In all reasonable Construction he ought to have the Credit and Thanks who enabled me to pay it.

§. X. "THUS I have examined the first Consequence which these Men seek to fasten upon our Principles, and that in both Parts of it. And by this time, I suppose, any one may see the Bottom of the whole Objection to be this, viz. That little or no Thanks are due for a Kindness, if he to whom it is done be not merely passive. If the Beneficiary be but so much as active in receiving and accepting it, the whole Grace of the Kindness is lost, all the Glory redounds to him, and little or none to the Benefactor." That is to say, "If I offer to a Man ready to perish Meat and Cloathing, yet all this is no Kindness, unless I do also put on his Cloaths by Force, open his Mouth and feed him in spite of his Teeth, and cramb the Meat down his Throat! The true Consequence of which is, that the Glory of God's Grace depends upon the Sullenness and Obstinacy of Men, and that the only way to advance it, is by a stout Opposition and spiteful Resistance of it."

§. XI. BUT since these Men are so forward in charging our Doctrine with being derogatory from the Glory of God, they cannot take it ill "if I go about to prove theirs by the same Test, and see which can best abide a Trial. Now when Opinions are brought to this Touchstone, it should, I think, be first agreed that the Glory of God consisteth not in this or that, but in all the Perfections of the Divine Nature." If therefore we are led by our Principles to yield to God all that Glory which these Men give him according to theirs, and moreover that Glory too which they do not, i. e. their Principles do not, then is our Doctrine more for the Glory of God than theirs is. "As

“ to the former, it is obvious to any Man who hath concerned himself in this
 “ Controversy, that those Excellencies of the Divine Majesty, which the Prin-
 “ ciples of these Men seem above all others to be singularly careful and tender
 “ of, are the Sovereign Dominion and irresistible Power of God. Now I say
 “ God is as much glorified by us in these Respects as by them, though not
 “ upon the same Principles. For, 1. We believe that God is the absolute So-
 “ vereign of the World, and can do with us what he will; nor is it any Di-
 “ minution of his absolute Dominion to say that he will use it wisely and
 “ righteously. 2^{dly}, In respect of God’s Power, we glorify him as much as if
 “ we said, that the Grace by which he converts us is omnipotent and irresisti-
 “ ble. For we say, that God can, if he pleases, convert us in that manner;
 “ and ’tis evident that Power is not the less for being not used upon some Oc-
 “ casions.” Wherefore it is plain that God is as much glorified, as to his
 Power and Dominion, upon our Principles, as he is upon theirs. “ But then
 “ the Odds are very great if we go to his Wisdom, Truth, Justice and Mercy.
 “ That our Doctrine provideth for God’s Glory in these Respects, cannot be
 “ disputed.” But does theirs do the same? “ Is the Wisdom of God glorified
 “ by supposing him to convert Man in a Way unsuitable to that Freedom and
 “ those Faculties which belong to his Nature; or to chuse those Means for the
 “ Accomplishment of our Redemption, which in some part undo the Work
 “ of his own Creation? But this seemeth to be the Consequence of that O-
 “ pinion, which makes Conversion to be the immediate Effect of an irresisti-
 “ ble Act, as I have shewn. Again, Is it not a foul Imputation against the
 “ Wisdom of God, to suppose that he hath appointed Means for the Recovery
 “ of Mankind, which cannot in the least Degree be serviceable to that End?
 “ But such is the Consequence of that Opinion, which makes it as impossible
 “ for the Sinner to be converted, as for the Dead to be raised, by Motives and
 “ Arguments, which are yet part of those Means which God hath appointed
 “ for our Conversion. Further, Is the Truth and Faithfulness of God glorified
 “ by supposing, that whereas the Promises of Pardon and Salvation seem to
 “ be made sincerely to all, without respect of Persons, yet in good earnest
 “ they were made only to a few select Persons, whom God designed to con-
 “ vert by his irresistible Power? Or is his Justice and Mercy glorified by sup-
 “ posing that he punishes Men with more grievous Torments for not ac-
 “ cepting the Offers of Grace, though it was utterly impossible for them so
 “ to do without that irresistible Act of Grace, which he purposed absolutely
 “ to deny them? And yet these are the Consequences of that Opinion, which
 “ resolves the Conversion of Sinners into that irresistible Power, which is used
 “ upon a few, and denied to all the rest. Further yet, It is not more for the
 “ Glory of God, that the Praise of the Good we do should be ascribed to his
 “ Grace, than that the Shame of our evil Doings should rest upon our selves.
 “ But if Conversion and Obedience be ascribed to a Cause which utterly ex-
 “ cludes the free Will of Man, a Man’s evil Actions are his Misfortunes, not
 “ his Faults; and then, I think, any Man may easily see that ’tis not for
 “ the Glory of God to make any further Enquiry what should be the Cause
 “ of this Evil. To conclude, Since the Glory of God is most of all advanced
 “ by our good Lives, it will follow that those Opinions concerning his Grace
 “ tend most to his Glory, which do most strongly oblige us to the Practice of
 “ Religion.” Now which Opinion gives the greatest Encouragement to Ver-
 tue and Holiness, whether that which ascribes Conversion to God’s Grace, yet
 so as to suppose it likewise an Effect of that Freedom and Choice which be-
 longs to our Nature, or that which makes Conversion to be an Effect of an
 absolute Decree and irresistible Power, I leave to indifferent Men to consider.

CHAP. XIV.

Some other evil Consequences examined.

§. I. **T**HE first evil Consequence relating to the Glory of God having been shewn to be no way chargeable upon our Principles, I proceed to a second, which is, (c) That if the Grace of God be resistible, so that the Operations of the Spirit being supposed, it is still left to the free Will and Determination of Man whether he will be converted, or not be converted, it will follow that the Difference between one Man and another, *i. e.* between him who is converted, and him who is not converted, is of Man's making; and this (as they suppose) contradicts what St. Paul teaches, 1 Cor. 4. 7. where he asks, *Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?* Now to this I answer, 1. By granting the Conclusion to be good, *viz.* That the Difference between one who is converted, and one who is not converted, is indeed of Man's making. But, 2. By denying that this does at all contradict what St. Paul has advanced in those Questions, *Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?* This I say I deny, and the Reasonableness of denying it will appear very plain by considering the Occasion upon which these Words were spoken.

P. 203. to 207.

§. II. * THERE prevailed then in those Days among the Christians at Corinth a strange Humour of valuing themselves upon their respective Teachers, which had occasioned great Difference and Contention among them. It hath been declared unto me of you, my Brethren, by them which are of the House of Chloe, that there are Contentions among you, Chap. 1. Verse 11. The Ground and Occasion of these Contentions you have in the following Verse. Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. In like manner, Chap. 3. Verse 1. And I, Brethren, could not speak unto you as unto Spiritual, but as unto Carnal——For whereas there is among you envying, and Strife, and Divisions, are ye not carnal?——For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? Verse 3, 4. The Apostle having prosecuted this Point at large throughout the whole Chapter, thus concludes his Discourse, Chap. 4. Verse 6. And these things, Brethren, I have in a Figure transferred to my self and to Apollos for your sakes, that ye might learn in us not to think of Men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. It seems by this that the Teachers, about whom these Differences arose, were some other Teachers, whom the Apostle spake of under the Persons of himself and Apollos; but this is not very material; that they were divided among themselves about some Teachers or other, is plain; and that which the Apostle aimed at was, to convince them of the great Folly and Unreasonableness of thus thinking of, *i. e.* esteeming Men, and being puffed up for one against another. And to those many Arguments which he had before used to this Purpose, he adds this very convincing one, ver. 7. For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? As if he had said, Who is it that makes one Man to differ from another in this respect, that he hath (at least in his own Esteem) a better Teacher than another? What hath any Man to value himself upon, on this behalf, which he

(c) Si Gratia operatur semper resistibiliter in nobis, ita ut positum sit penes liberum hominis arbitrium, vel ea uti, vel illi resistere, sequetur——eum qui bene utitur Gratia, seipsum ab aliis discernere, &——hominem proprie suae discretionis causam esse——At Paulus contra, *Quis te discernit? Quid habes quod non acceperis?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. Id. Ibid. *Quaest.* 6. §. 17.

hath not received from God? But *if thou didst receive it, i. e.* that for which thou art thus much puffed up; *why* then by being puffed up *dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* as the Apostle presently subjoins. This appears so evidently to be the Scope of the Place, that it is not denied even by our Adversaries themselves. Now that God was indeed the Author of *THIS* Difference, must be granted, for this plain reason, *viz.* That if one Man had a more excellent Teacher than another, it was entirely owing to the Mercy and good Providence of God, who had sent him such a Teacher. But it will not follow from hence that God is the Author of any other Difference that there may happen to be between one Man and another; and particularly it will not follow that he is the Author of that Difference which is now under dispute. And therefore this Place is clearly nothing at all to the Purpose.

§. III. BUT say our Adversaries, (d) *Although the Apostle here speaks of the Difference between Teachers more or less eminent in their several Gifts, yet nothing hinders but that the Words may be very well applied to that Difference which there is between the Faithful, i. e. the Converted, and the Unconverted.* Their Meaning is, that these Words ought to be so applied; a thing which they may assert as confidently as they please, but can never prove. But before I examine their Arguments, give me leave to take notice, that it is (e) falsely pretended that the Apostle here speaks of the Difference *between Teachers more or less eminent in their several Gifts*; for the Question put, is not who maketh one Teacher to differ from another? But who maketh *thee*, *i. e.* *thee who boastest to differ from another, i. e.* (as I said before) in this respect, that thou hast this Man for thy Teacher, and another that? It is not necessary to grant that the Apostle allowed so much as that there was any Difference between their respective Teachers in Point of Excellency; and it seems most probable to me that he spake in his own Person, and in the Person of *Apollos*, on purpose to avoid the Odium of such a Comparison. But whether he allowed this or not, yet still he doth not affirm that God was the Author of this Difference. After all, I do not say that there was no Difference between these Teachers, nor yet that God was not the Author of that Difference. On the contrary, it seems very probable that there was a Difference, and that this Difference consisted in this, that some were endued with a greater Measure of extraordinary Gifts than others. For that these Gifts were commonly bestowed upon the Preachers of the Gospel in those Days, is certain; that they were variously distributed, is likewise certain; and since these Gifts were the most eminent in their Kind, it is most likely that that the Difference of some Teachers above others, with respect to these, was that, upon the Account of which the *Corinthians* so much boasted. It is likewise true, that this Difference was of God's making. For it depended not at all upon the Will of Man whether he should be thus or thus qualified by extraordinary Gifts, but merely upon the good Pleasure of God, who *divided these Gifts to every Man severally as he would*, 1 Cor. 12. 11. Supposing then that the Apostle was here speaking of this Difference, how does it follow that these Words ought to be applied to the Difference that there is between the Converted and the Unconverted? To say that the Sentence is general, is to say nothing. For they themselves grant that the Apostle is here speaking

(d) Licet Apostolus ibi agat de discretionem doctorum eminentium ab iis qui minus donorum acceperunt; non obstat quo minus ad fidelium discretionem optime possit applicari; quia sententia generalis est, & quod de uno bonorum (*donorum* I suppose it should be) genere dicitur, idem de omnibus aliis vere dicitur tum naturalibus tum supernaturalibus — Deinde si homo fidelis nihil potest facere in Charismatis vel comparandis vel augendis — quanto minus in jaciendo fidei fundamento, quod longe difficilius est? *Ibid.*

(e) Our learned Author agrees with these Divines, that *the Apostle speaks of those Gifts which God had variously distributed among his Ministers for the Edification of the Church*, when he says, *Who maketh thee to differ*, &c. I have given my Reasons above why I think this to be a Mistake, which the Reader may consider of. In the mean time it appears to be a Mistake, which does not hurt the Argument.

of a particular Case; and since general Sentences may be, and often are, limited to particular Cases, this may be so too, unless some good Reason can be assigned why it ought not to be so. Are they then able to assign any reason why it ought to be said, that the Difference that there is between the Converted and the Unconverted is of God's making, as well as that which there is between one Teacher and another, with respect to their extraordinary Gifts? Yes, they give us two, such as they are. The first is, That *what is affirmed of one sort of Gifts, may truly be affirmed of all others, both natural and supernatural*; which is a most monstrous and glaring Falshood; there being nothing more apparent to common Sense, than that there are an hundred things which may be affirmed of the supernatural Gifts of God, which cannot be affirmed truly of the natural. Besides, the Question is not what may or may not be affirmed of the Gifts of God, but what may be affirmed of that Difference which there is between the Converted and the Unconverted. Now to suppose that this is the Gift of God, is to suppose that God is the Author of this Difference; and consequently this Argument only begs the thing in question. The next Reason is much of the same Stamp; for there we are told, that *if a Man can do nothing towards the procuring or increasing the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, much less is he able to do any thing towards laying the Foundation of Faith, which is a far more difficult Work*. By the way, it is the first time I ever heard that any thing could be more difficult for a Man to do, than to procure or increase the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost; and I fancy 'tis no easy Matter to assign any thing that can be more difficult than an absolute Impossibility. But to let this pass. If by *laying the Foundation of Faith* they mean *actually believing and being converted*, when a Man has all those Assistances which are necessary to enable him to believe and be converted, what can be more shameful than to pretend that this is a Work even of equal Difficulty with procuring and increasing the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost? If they do not mean this, it signifies nothing to enquire what they do mean, because whatever it be, this Answer will be manifestly nothing to the Purpose. It appears then, I hope, that these Divines have given us no good Reason why these Words ought to be applied to that Difference which there is between the Converted and the Unconverted. I shall now close up this Point, with laying down three Observations, which I think will demonstratively prove that they cannot be so applied.† And, 1. God cannot be the Author of that which he doth not approve. Now God, who wills that all Men should repent and be converted, cannot approve of that Difference in Men, that some should be converted, and others not converted. Therefore God is not the Author of that Difference. 2. If God be the Author of this Difference, then it must be as well through God that one Man doth not repent, as that another doth repent; because if it were through a Man's own self that he doth not repent, the Difference would be of Man's making. But it cannot be said, that it is through God that any Man doth not repent; for this were to make God the Author of Evil, which is Blasphemy. 3. If God makes the Difference between the Converted and the Unconverted, it will follow, that at the last Day he must judge his own Actions, and not the Actions of Men; for it is this Difference alone which God judgeth, and which is the Foundation of the Difference of his Dealings with the one and with the other. But to say that God will at the last Day judge not the Actions of Men, but his own Actions, is absurd and blasphemous; therefore God is not the Author of this Difference.

§. IV. AND thus much may suffice to have been spoken concerning the second Consequence charged upon our Principles; a third is, That if the Grace of God may be resisted, *it is, and ever was* "possible, in the nature of the thing, that none should ever be converted." And this Conclusion again I own to be good, and know no reason at all why we ought to be afraid to stand by it.

"It is no Imputation upon the Wisdom of Governours in enacting wholesome

“ Laws for the Good of their Subjects, and in providing for the Obedience
 “ of those Laws by Rewards and Punishments; that when they have done
 “ all, it is barely possible that no one Person within their Dominions will
 “ be retained within his Duty. Nay, on the other hand, that Freedom
 “ which includes a bare Possibility that all may disobey, proves the Wis-
 “ dom and Justice of governing Mankind by Laws and moral Induce-
 “ ments to Obedience. For if we suppose Men to be under a Necessity
 “ either of doing what is required, or of doing the contrary, it will be
 “ very hard to understand how governing them by moral Means should be
 “ wise in the former Case, or just in the latter.” But this is not the Point;
 that which these Men seem most afraid of is, the making it “ UNCERTAIN
 “ *whether ever any in the World will actually be converted;*” which, say they, must
 * be the Case, if it be possible that none should be converted.* For they tell
 us, that (f) *those things which may either be or not be, cannot be the Objects of*
certain Knowledge; and consequently, that if it be possible that none should be
 † converted.† Now as to God, if it be the Principle of these Men, that he can-
 not foresee contingent Events, it is not ours; “ on the contrary, we believe
 “ (induced thereto by Reason and Scripture) that all Events are known to God,
 “ even those which depend upon the free Will of Man; and therefore that he
 “ knew that some would be converted, and who those were,” although at the
 same time it was in the nature of the thing possible for them not to be con-
 * verted. *If any one sees any Difficulty in reconciling these things, I shall re-
 commend him to those who have written *ex professo* upon this Subject, and in
 particular to the learned Dr. Clark, (g) who has handled the Point with so much
 Accuracy and Clearness, that I think nothing farther can be necessary to satis-
 fy any judicious and impartial Reader. In the mean time I look upon my self
 to be under no manner of Obligation to concern my self in this Matter, if
 for no other reason, yet for this, *viz.* That how difficult soever it may be to
 be conceived, that a thing which is contingent, *i. e.* which may or may not
 be, is capable of being certainly foreknown; it is every whit as difficult to be
 conceived that nothing at all should be contingent, which those Men must ne-
 cessarily maintain, who say that God foreknows all things, and at the same
 time affirm that Contingencies are not the Objects of certain Knowledge. For
 if nothing at all is contingent; if every thing that is, necessarily is what it is,
 and could not possibly have been otherwise, it will be hard to conceive how
 Man should be a free Agent, and consequently how he should be a proper Sub-
 † ject of moral Obligations. If these Men will say that there is no Difficulty in
 this Point, let them shew us that there is none; and when they have done this,
 I doubt not but we shall be able with the same Ease to shew them that there
 is none in the other. For the present therefore I shall presume it as a thing
 that needs not be proved, that GOD may be, and is certain, that some will be
 converted, although it is in the nature of the thing possible that none may be
 † converted;† and after this it will be in vain to alledge that MAN cannot be
 certain of it. “For so long as Man may be certain that those things will come
 “ to pass which God hath foretold, he may be certain that God’s Grace will
 “ prevail in Multitudes of Men before the End of all Things. For by divers
 “ Predictions in holy Writ we are assured, that when Christ shall come to
 “ Judgment, there will be some who shall be changed, and put on Immortality.”
 But supposing it did follow from our Principles, that Man could not be certain
 that any would be converted, “it would be as true a Consequence, that neither
 “ can he be certain that any would at last be found unconverted: And if these

(f) Sic Præscientia Dei incerta redditur & dubia — Quia rei quæ aliter se habere potest, nulla certa potest esse cognitio. *Ibid.* §. 19.

(g) Demonst. of the Being and Attributes of God, Prop. 10.

“ Men imagine that the former Uncertainty would be apt to do us Harm, when
 “ they tell us what it is, it will perhaps be no hard Matter to shew them that
 “ it is sufficiently repaired by the latter.” But for ought I can see, all the Harm
 that would follow if we should say, that no Man is certain that any will be converted, is, “ that we must then deny the Doctrine of Personal Election and particular Redemption, as they understand and explain it. Now if this be the
 “ worst Consequence from our Principles concerning Grace, that we must
 “ reject their leading Error, I think that, for this very reason, we ought not
 “ to be ashamed to own them.”

§. V. A FOURTH ill Consequence charged upon our Principles is, that (b) ^{P. 236. to 240.} *They tend to make Men careless in the Duties of Prayer and Thanksgiving.* An Objection which I should never have look'd for, but from those who are beyond all measure careless in what they say. For if our Principle be, that the Grace of God is necessary to enable us to perform our Duty, what more pressing Motive than this can be desired, to encourage Men both to pray for Grace, and to be thankful for it when they have received it. * *But to what Purpose, say they, should a Man pray for the ACT of Conversion, if it depends not upon Grace, but upon the free Will of Man? And how shall he give Thanks for that Gift, (i. e. for the ACT of Conversion) if it is to be attributed to himself, and not to the Power of God?* I answer; We do not pray, nor are we commanded to pray, for the ACT of Conversion. That Expression is no where to be found in Scripture. We are taught indeed to pray for Conversion, i. e. that we may fulfil the Will of God, which I hope may very consistently be done, if it be through God's Grace that we are enabled to do this, albeit when we are thus enabled, the ACT of Conversion depends upon our selves, i. e. upon the Use of our Liberty. If these Men will say that we cannot consistently do this, they must then maintain that we cannot consistently pray to God to give us any thing, unless it be supposed that we are purely passive in the receiving it; which surely would be a very ridiculous Assertion. † For we are taught to pray that God would *give us our daily Bread*, “ Yet it is prepared by the Care and Industry of Man. It
 “ is easily purchased by the Rich; it is either hardly earned, or received from
 “ charitable Persons by the Poor; and if it comes by none of these Ways, I
 “ doubt we may starve for all our Prayers. Wherefore since we may very congruously pray for our daily Food, though we are not merely passive in being fed, I desire to be inform'd why we may not as congruously pray for
 “ Conversion,” although we are not merely passive in being converted? The Case indeed is too clear to stand in need of any farther Illustration; and I cannot think that even these Men themselves are so blind, as not to see how much more consistently we can pray for Conversion upon our Principles, than they can upon theirs. Let them tell me if they can, what Good that Man is likely to do by such Prayers as these, who is absolutely predestinated either to Eternal Life, or to Eternal Damnation: But such, according to them, is every Man that is born into the World; so that unless they will say that a Man be benefited by that which cannot make the least Alteration in his Condition, they must needs grant that it will go every whit as well with him, whether he prays for Conversion, or prays for it not. * In common Prudence then methinks these Men should first have removed this Difficulty from their own Doors, before they venture with so much Freedom to lay it at ours. But thus it commonly is with those who are engaged in desperate Attempts, and are resolved to stand their Ground at all Hazards; they

(b) Hæc sententia enervat studium precum & gratiarum actionem. — Ecquid enim peterent a Deo fideles, fidei & conversionis actum, si is non pendet a gratia sed a libero hominis arbitrio? & quomodo gratias de eo dono agerent, si hoc voluntati suæ, non Dei virtuti acceptum ferre debent? *Ibid.* §. 18.

lay hold of every Weapon that comes in their Way, not considering where it is likely to do most Execution, whether to their Adversaries or to themselves.

§. VI. A FIFTH ill Consequence charged upon our Principle is, (1) That it confounds the Grace of Adam with the Grace of Christ. The Meaning of which we must gather by what follows. Adam, say they, had a POWER to stand as well as we have a POWER to believe. So that if this be all, our Condition under Grace, will not be better than his Condition by Nature, i. e. before his Fall. Now if the Sense of these last Words be this, that our Condition under Grace is the same with the Condition of Adam by Nature in this respect, that we by the Abuse of our Liberty may come short of the Promise of the Second Covenant, as well as he did of the First; I grant this to be the natural and necessary Consequence of our Principle; and I challenge them to show how this is any Objection against the Covenant of Grace, or how indeed it could at all have been a Covenant upon any other Supposition. But if the Meaning be that our Condition under Grace, is in no respect better than the Condition of Adam by Nature, I deny that it follows; for it is a strange Way of talking, to say, that because we may forfeit our Title to Eternal Life as well as Adam, therefore our Condition and his, are in all respects the same. There are divers respects in which one Covenant may differ from another; and the Second Covenant made through Christ, hath manifestly the Advantage of the First Covenant made with Adam, that it is established upon more easy Conditions. The First Covenant required perfect unsinning Obedience, and therefore Adam forfeited his Title to Eternal Life by the first Offence. Whereas the Second Covenant allows room for Repentance, the Condition of it being, not that we should never sin, but that we should not always continue in Sin. But when all is done, 'tis past my Skill to conjecture how it came to pass that the Superiority of the Condition of Man under Grace, above that of Adam by Nature, should be thought a proper Foundation to argue upon in this Case. For to make this Consideration a proper Foundation to argue upon, it is necessary that it may be proved *a priori*, that there is indeed such a Superiority. Because if this Superiority can be proved only *a Posteriori*, i. e. no other way than by comparing the two Covenants together, the Argument either begs the Question, or destroys it self. For if you say, that whereas Adam had only a Power to obey God, we obey him by an irresistible Operation of the Spirit, and would hence argue for this Superiority, you then beg the Question. If you place this Superiority in any other respect, you then confess that our Condition is superior to the Condition of Adam, even notwithstanding we do not obey God irresistibly any more than he. Now this I believe is what these Men will find it a hard Matter to do, even to prove, any other way than by comparing the two Covenants together, that our Condition now under Grace, is superior to the Condition of Adam by Nature, i. e. (for so I would all along be understood) before his Fall. I know of no Text that asserts this, and because these Divines have produced none, I vehemently suspect that they know of none neither. And as to Reason, I am sure no Argument can possibly be drawn from thence. For that God should restore fall'n Man to his Original State, was more than he could claim. If then he has restored him to a better, he has indeed abundant Reason to be thankful; but if not, he has no Reason upon any Account to complain.

§. VII. A SIXTH ill Consequence, and the last that I shall mention is,

(1) Sic confunditur gratia *Adami* cum gratia *Christi*. Nam *Adamo* etiam datum fuit *ut posse stare*, ut nobis datur *ut posse credere*. Non ergo potior erit conditio nostra sub gratia, sorte ipsius in natura. Ibid. §. 20.

That if the Grace of God may be resisted, it will follow, (*k*) *That God does not operate more efficaciously in the Conversion of Men, i. e.* (for this is the only Sense I can put upon these Words) he does not do more towards converting Men, *than the Devil does towards seducing them.* A Saying so very weak, and withal so very wicked, that I am ashamed, and even tremble to repeat it! If this were a true Consequence, I should without any farther Deliberation throw aside the Principle from whence it comes, being well assured that nothing can be true, which in the End fastens so foul a Reproach upon the All-sufficient and All-merciful God. But how do these Men go about to justify this Conclusion? Why, by a Reason truly worthy of themselves. It is, *because the Devil makes use of Persuasions, Exhortations, Promises, and Threatnings to pervert Men.* The Meaning of which, I suppose, is, that the Devil does not force Men to sin irresistibly, but entices them by the use of such Motives as are proper to persuade. Be it so. How does it follow that he does as much towards seducing us, as God does towards our Conversion? Why, according to us, God brings us to Conversion no otherwise than in the way of Persuasion. But give me leave to ask this one plain Question: Who does most, the King who offers me a Thousand Pounds a Year to engage me to his Service, or the Traytor who offers me a Penny to rebel? If God does bring us to Conversion no otherwise than in the Way of Persuasion; yet I hope it will be allowed by all reasonable Men, that he does more for us, than the Devil does against us, If he makes use of stronger and better Motives to persuade us, than the Devil does or can make use of. Now let any Man bring this Matter to a fair Reckoning, and see whether God deserves that Usage which these Men bestow upon him. What Motives can the Devil possibly apply to persuade us to become his Servants? Why he once try'd his whole Strength with the great *Captain of our Salvation*, and the farthest he could go was, *All these Things, even all the Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of them, will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me,* Matt. 4. 8, 9. But, as has before been observed, “between *all the Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of them* on the one Side, and between *an Inheritance in the Kingdom of God* on the other, there is no more Proportion than between Vanity and Perfection, than between a Moment and Eternity.” Our Adversaries were well aware of this Reply, and therefore they have endeavoured to evade it. The Substance of what they say is this, that *though the Devil proposes only a false and corruptible Good, yet he proposes it as a true, i. e. real and eternal Good.* Whether he does or does not, 'tis no matter to enquire. If he does propose Temporal Things to Men under this Notion, it is their Faults if they embrace them as such. That which God offers on the one hand, will be infinitely superior and preferable in it self, to that which the Devil does or can offer on the other, let him represent it as deceitfully as he will; and if these Men can think that the Goodness of God is therefore the less, because Men are so foolish and wicked as to undervalue and despise it, I think it is high time to have done disputing with them. I might farther mention (what has also been already taken notice of) those many Ways of God's good Providence by which he traineth us up to his Fear; and those secret Influences of his blessed Spirit, by which he prepares us to be wrought upon by the Motives of a Life to come; which means (these Men may say if they please, but) I dare not say, are not far more powerful in themselves to lead us to Obedience, than those which the Devil makes use of are to draw us from it. — But who sees not already that this Objection is absurdly urged against us, and ought to be

(*k*) Sic Deus non efficacius operabitur in hominum conversione, quam Satan operatur in hominum seductione, quia Satan etiam suasionibus, hortationibus, & minis utitur ad pervertendos homines. Nec discriminis ratio in eo potest esse, quod Deus æterna & incorruptibilia bona promittit, Satan vero tantum temporalia & corruptibilia. Quia licet falsa sunt & caduca bona quæ promittit, ea tamen exhibet ut vera & æterna. *Ibid.* §. 21.

returned back upon themselves? Some indeed there are (*viz.* the Elect) for whom, according to their Principles, God does enough, and in my Opinion a great deal too much, considering they are reasonable Creatures. But what does he do for the Reprobates, to bring them to Conversion? Why, nothing at all, because he does not intend that ever they should be converted. The Devil therefore works irresistibly in these, whilst God works irresistibly in the others. So that according to this Principle, it is manifest, and cannot be denied, that with respect to the far greater Part of Mankind, God does less towards their Conversion, than the Devil does to seduce them, if it may properly be said that he does less than another, who does indeed nothing. One thing 'tis true may be said, *viz.* That as God does nothing himself, so the Devil does nothing neither. He is so sure of them beforehand, that it would be a vain thing for him by any Temptations to go about to make them surer. And to speak my Mind freely; If what these Men teach about Absolute Decrees be true, the Devil of all others has the least to do in this World; so that if they shall think this to be a proper Answer to the Objection, they are most heartily welcome to it. And thus much concerning the Possibility of resisting the Grace of God working Conversion.

CHAP. XV.

Of the Possibility of falling from Grace after Conversion.

§. I. **T**HERE is but one thing now remaining, which is, to examine those Arguments by which these Divines endeavour to prove the Impossibility of falling from Grace after Conversion is wrought. And this I do the more willingly enter upon, because if at last this Notion be found to be false, we need no other Argument to shew that the other is so too, seeing (as has been observed *Chap.* 10.) there can be no room to pretend that the Grace of God is irresistible before Conversion, if it be not irresistible afterward. I have there given my Reasons why I think that the Grace of God after Conversion may be resisted, and rendred ineffectual; and those Reasons are so very plain and convincing, that I see no occasion there can be to consider them over again; so that, I say, I have nothing now to do but to examine those Arguments which are commonly urged in favour of the contrary Opinion, which I shall do with as much Brevity as I can.

§. II. THE Question therefore in a few Words is this: (1) *Whether a Man who is in a State of Holiness and Acceptance with God, may not fall away from that State, and by continuing in Impenitency fail at last of Eternal Salvation?* To prove that he cannot, they argue; first in general, from the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, and the Merits and Intercession of Jesus Christ. Secondly, By alledging some particular Texts of Scripture, in which, as they suppose, this Doctrine is asserted. Thirdly, From certain Absurdities, which seem to them to follow from the contrary Hypothesis. I begin with their general Arguments, which being of very small Weight, will therefore be the sooner dispatched. The first of them is, (m) *That since the Covenant of Grace is firm and unchangeable,*

(1) Quæstio eo redit; an verus fidelis — possit — fidem — amittere — & finaliter in incredulitate & impenitentia manere; atque ita jure ad regnum cœlorum — excidere, & in æternum damnari. — Negant constanter Orthodoxi. *Ibid.* Quæst. 16. §. 7.

(m) Cum (fœdus gratiæ) firmum sit & immutabile — perpetua etiam debent esse & immutabilia quæ ab ipso pendent beneficia; qualia sunt imprimis Fides, Justificatio, & Regeneratio. *Ibid.* §. 10.

therefore the Benefits which flow from that Covenant (the principal whereof are Faith, Regeneration, and Justification) must be perpetual and unchangeable also. But this Argument is a manifest begging of the Thing in question. For the Force of it lies in this, *viz.* That to suppose that Faith and Regeneration are not perpetual and unchangeable, *i. e.* to suppose it possible for those who believe and are regenerate to fall away from the Faith, and become unregenerate, is to suppose the Covenant of Grace to be changed. Now this cannot be pretended without supposing the Covenant of Grace in its Original State to be such, as requires that those who believe and are regenerate, should be under an Impossibility of falling away from the Faith, and becoming unregenerate, which is the very thing that is to be proved. That Covenant is firm and unchangeable, the Nature and Constitution whereof always continues to be the same. And the Benefits of that Covenant will be unchangeable too, if they be unchangeably, *i. e.* constantly bestowed, according to the Nature and Constitution of that Covenant. Wherefore though to persevere in Faith and Regeneration, *i. e.* (for it is all one) to persevere in Faith and Obedience, is indeed a Benefit of the New Covenant, because it is the Effect of that Grace, which is given us in vertue of that Covenant; yet if (as we say) the Covenant promises this Benefit only upon this Condition, that we concur or co-operate with the Grace of God, by the use of our own earnest and sincere Endeavours, it is plain that we by failing in these Endeavours may fail also of the Benefit, and the Covenant nevertheless remain unchangeably the same. Nay, upon supposition that the Nature and Constitution of the Covenant of Grace originally was as I have here represented it to be, this very Doctrine, that those who believe and are regenerate cannot possibly fall away from the Faith, and become unregenerate, will necessarily imply that the Covenant of Grace has been changed. For this implies that the Promise of Perseverance in Faith and Obedience is now absolute, whereas on the contrary it is supposed that at the first it was only conditional. To argue therefore from the Immutability of the Covenant of Grace, that Faith and Regeneration when once attained unto can never be lost, without proving first of all that the Original Nature and Constitution of that Covenant required that it should be so, is absurd and preposterous, as, this being once made appear, it will be impertinent and ridiculous. For let it but once be shewn by plain Texts of Scripture, that God has made an absolute Promise to any that they shall always persevere in Holiness, and the Question will be at an end. There will then be no occasion to tell us, that if the Covenant be unchangeable, the Benefits also must be unchangeable; no, we believe as firmly as they that God is true, and will always perform what he promises. And we believe that what the Covenant of Grace was at first, that it is now, and the same it will continue to be even unto the End of the World.

§. III. WHETHER any such Texts as these can be produced, will be seen afterwards. In the mean while I proceed to their second general Argument, which is drawn from the Merits and Satisfaction of Jesus Christ. (*n*) *Can it be thought* (say they) *that Christ will permit those who are given him of the Father* (*i. e.* the Regenerate) *those whom he hath so dearly purchased. not with Gold, nor with Silver, but with his precious Blood, to fall into the Hands of another, even of his most bitter Enemy? No, as he is the Saviour of his Body, he cannot suffer that any of them should perish.* These are fine Words, but they conclude nothing. For what should hinder but that Christ may suffer those whom he hath redeemed by his precious Blood, and are by Faith and Obedience brought into a State of

(*n*) Quis credat passurum esse Christum ut qui ipsi dati sunt a Patre in hereditatem & peculium; quos tam care emit non auro, non argento, sed pretioso suo sanguine——in alterius, & quidem insensissimi sibi hostis, potestatem prolabantur? Imo, ut servator est corporis sui, non potest pati ut quisquam ex iis pereat Ibid. §. 16.

Favour and Acceptance with him; what should hinder, I say, but that he may suffer these to fall into the Hands of the Devil, if it be through their own Folly and Carelessness that they do so? This looks as if Christ could not be happy without us; as if our Loss would turn to his Disadvantage. But this is not the Case; he redeemed us not for his own Benefit, but for ours; we are the Gainers by that Covenant of Mercy, which he hath established in his Blood, and not he. And therefore whatever it be which he has required of us, as necessary to qualify us to receive the Benefits of this Covenant, that we must perform, or else his dying for us will be so far from being a good reason why we ought to receive those Benefits, that it will render us but so much the more unworthy of them, as our Neglect shews a want of Regard and Love to him who hath so much loved us. If then Perseverance in Holiness be promised to none absolutely, but only upon condition that they join their own hearty Endeavours to the Divine Grace, it cannot in the least derogate from the Wisdom or the Goodness of our Redeemer, if when we grow careless of our selves, he suffers us to fall away and perish. Yea rather it behoveth him that those should be made the sad Examples of his Vengeance, who, when he has done so much for their Sakes, will not do any thing at all for their own.

§. IV. As little to the Purpose is what they alledge 3dly from (o) *the Efficacy of Christ's Intercession.* Christ, say they, *prayed for Peter that his Faith might not fail, Luke 22. 31. He put up the same Request for the rest of the Apostles, and for all those who should afterward believe in him, John 17. 11, 20. And this he not only did whilst he was upon Earth, but continues to do in Heaven, where he for ever liveth to make Intercession for us.* Now for as much as the Intercession of Christ for us cannot be in vain, hence they infer, that *this Perseverance which he so earnestly prayeth for, must be certain and undoubted.* All this, I say, is nothing to the Purpose: For we are taught to believe that our Prayers shall not be in vain, if we pray as we ought, any more than the Prayers of Christ; and therefore this Point may as well be argued from those Places of Scripture, where we are taught to pray for our selves, that we may persevere in well doing, as from those in which Christ is said to pray for the same thing on our Behalf. But it can be argued neither from the one, nor from the other. For since our being commanded to pray for any thing, does not imply that we are merely passive in receiving the thing we pray for, as has been already shewn; it is plain that our Prayers may be answered, and therefore not be in vain, though what we desire be actually wanting. The Reason is manifest, *viz.* That he who prays to another for that, to the actual Attainment whereof it is yet necessary that he himself does something, cannot be suppos'd to pray absolutely for the thing itself, but only for so much as is necessary to be done by that other to whom he prays for it. Thus when I pray to God for my daily Bread, I pray not that God would put the Bread into my Mouth, or into my Hands; which would be a very foolish and extravagant Request. But I pray only, that God by his good Providence, through the use of my own honest Endeavours, would enable me to provide that which is sufficient for me. This, I say, is what I pray for; and it is plain that God may grant me what I ask, and yet I all the while be in a very starving Condition through my own Sluggishness. Here then lies the Question, *viz.* Whether Perseverance in Holiness be absolutely a Gift of God, or not; *i. e.* whether God does all that is necessary to be done that we may persevere, or leaves any thing as necessary to be done by us. If you say that God does all, this is what I shall require you to prove: But you cannot prove it from hence,

(o) Efficacia Intercessionis (Christi) cum irrita esse non possit, certa & indubitata debet esse, quam tam sollicitè pro suis petit, perseverantia. Pro Petro orat ne fides ejus deficiat, Luc. 22. 31. — Imo & pro omnibus credituris orat, John. 17. 11, 20. — Nec in terris tantum — sed in Coelis, perpetuo semper vivens ut intercedat pro nobis. Ibid. §. 19.

that otherwise either our Prayers that we may persevere, or Christ's Prayers on our Behalf, will be vain. For if Perseverance be not absolutely a Gift of God, we do not then pray for it absolutely, or if we do, we pray amiss, and then our Prayers ought to be vain. Upon this Supposition, he who prays for Perseverance, prays for it in no other Sense than that wherein he prays for his daily Bread, *i. e.* he only prays for so much Grace or Strength from God as will enable him to persevere, which it is plain God may grant, though he falls away through his own Carelessness. Now all this is equally true of the Prayers of Christ for us. For that which is a Rule to us in this Case, is also a Rule to him. As we ought not, so he cannot pray for any thing but in such a manner as is consistent with the Nature of his own Covenant; and therefore if Perseverance be there promised not absolutely, but upon Condition only that we concur with the Grace of God, he cannot pray for it on our Behalf any otherwise than upon this Condition. The Intent and Meaning therefore of Christ's Prayers, can only be that we may have Grace, or Strength to stand, which since we may have although we actually fall, it is plain that the Success of Christ's Intercession does not in the least depend upon our Perseverance, and consequently, that though we do not persevere, yet his Intercession will not be in vain.

§. V. HAVING thus answered their general Arguments, I come now to examine those particular Texts of Scripture, wherein, as they suppose, this Doctrine is asserted. And 1st. They alledge that Text of St. Paul, Rom. 11. 29. *For the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance.* (p) Now (say they) if the Gifts of God be such, as that being once bestowed, God does not repent of his having bestowed them, that is, never recalls them, they must then of Necessity be always continued to us. Thus far, I confess, the Argument goes on very safely; but how we are to carry it on, so as to bring it up to the Point in Hand, is what we are left to find out for our selves. That which they seem to me to drive at is this, That since God never recalls those Gifts which he once bestows, therefore he never recalls Faith and Regeneration, which are his Gifts; and consequently, he who once believes and is regenerate, cannot possibly fall away from the Faith and become unregenerate. But this Conclusion does by no means follow. For thus much is certain, that these Words of the Apostle must not be taken universally, as if the Meaning of them were, that God never recalls any Gift that he once bestows; for this were to make him assert that which contradicts every Day's Experience. Our Life, our Health, our Strength, are the Gifts of God; yet of these it is true, that as he *giveth*, so he *taketh away*. Our Understanding, and all the Faculties of the Mind, are likewise the Gifts of God, and yet they are very frequently recalled by an Act of that same Providence from which we received them. There are many other Instances of the same Kind, which every ones own Observation will naturally suggest to him: Wherefore since these Words must not be extended universally to all, but limited to some particular Sorts of Gifts, we must next see how far this Limitation reaches. Possibly it may reach so far as to exclude Faith and Regeneration wholly out of the Assertion; and that it does so, will appear very plain from these two following Observations, *viz.* 1st. That this Assertion must necessarily be limited to such Things as are wholly and solely the Gifts of God. For God cannot be said to repent of that which he did not bestow. Whatever therefore it be which arises partly from God, and partly from our selves, that must needs be excluded out of the Assertion. Now this is the Case of Faith and Regeneration, as has been shewn. It is God who enables us to believe and obey, and therefore it is that Faith and Obedience are called his Gifts. Yet

(p) *Dona Dei & vocatio sunt ἀμετεμέλητα*, Rom. 11. 24. Jam vero si talia sunt quorum semel concessorum Deum nunquam poeniteat, *i. e.* nunquam ea revocet, ea in nobis manere necesse est. *Ibid.* §. 21.

actual Faith and Obedience proceed from our selves, that is, from the Use of our Liberty, and therefore Faith and Regeneration are our Works, as well as his Gifts, *i. e.* they arise partly from God, and partly from our selves. Seeing then that the Power of Believing and Obeying is all that God gives, the most that this Argument can conclude, is, that he will never take away this Power; which were it true, 'tis plain we might fall away for all that. But even this will not follow; for I observe 2^{dly}, That this Assertion must be further limited to the absolute Gifts of God, *i. e.* to those Gifts, the Continuance whereof he has not made to depend upon any Conditions to be performed by us. For if God has made the Continuance of any Gifts of his to depend upon Conditions, 'tis plain that if we fail in the Performance of these Conditions, God may, and probably will take away those Gifts. Of such Gifts as these therefore it cannot be affirmed that they are without Repentance; and therefore all such Gifts must needs be also excluded out of the Apostles Assertion. Now of this Sort of Gifts is that Grace by which God enables us to believe in him, and obey the Gospel of his Son. He gives it to all to whom the Gospel is preached, but has promised the Continuance of it to those only who make a due Use and Improvement of it. The Place of Scripture from whence this is concluded, has been set down in the former Part of this Discourse. *For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have Abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath*, Matt. 25. 29.

§. VI. I TAKE this to be a very plain and satisfactory Answer to the Objection propounded, and therefore proceed to a Second Text, which is that of our Saviour, *John* 10. 27, 28, 29. *My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand: My Father which gave me them is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand.* But these Words are nothing at all to the Purpose. For by the *Sheep* of Christ are not meant those who believed, but those who by a meek and a teachable Disposition were prepared or disposed to become his Disciples, as I have (q) elsewhere shewn. Now whereas it is said of these, that *they shall never perish, and that no Man shall be able to pluck them out of Christ's or his Father's Hands*; it does not appear that these Words relate to their Perseverance here, but rather that they refer to that State of Happiness which shall be the Reward of their Perseverance hereafter. For there are four Things which Christ affirms of his *Sheep*, which seem by a natural Order to be subsequent to each other, *viz.* 1. That they *hear his Voice*, *i. e.* that they attend to the preaching of the Gospel, and embrace Christ as the true Shepherd. 2. That *he knows them*, *i. e.* that he receives and owns them as his Sheep. 3. That *they follow him*, *i. e.* that they become obedient in Heart and Life to his Doctrines and Commandments. 4. That *he giveth unto them Eternal Life*. Here, I say, is a manifest Gradation from one thing to another, in which the Promise of Eternal Life, being the last and highest Step that the nature of the thing will allow of, it seems more reasonable to understand the Words which follow as a fuller Explication and Enforcement of this Promise, than to make them signify any thing distinct from it and referable to what had been mentioned before. Upon this Supposition then the Sense will run thus, *I give unto them Eternal Life*, *i. e.* I put them into a State in which they shall never perish, and which when they are once possessed of, *no Man shall pluck them out of my Hands*. The reason follows, *My Father which gave me them is greater than all*, *i. e.* he is more powerful than all, and therefore *no Man is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hands*, *i. e.* to bereave them of that Happiness which he has conferred upon them. I shall leave it to the Reader to consider whether this be not a very natural Explication of the Words;

which if it be allowed to be, how impertinently they are alledged in the present Controversy, there will be no need to inform him. But after all, supposing that these Words did refer to the Perseverance of Christ's Sheep in the Faith and Obedience of the Gospel when once embraced, I see not how they will infer the Conclusion desired to be drawn from them. For it is certainly true of the meek and disinterested Man, that as he will not reject the Gospel at first, so neither will he be prevailed on by any worldly Consideration to forsake it afterwards. He who is under no evil Biass of Mind, by which he may be prejudiced against the Truth, and who has no Value for the Life that now is, in comparison to that which is to come (which is the Notion of a meek and disinterested Man) such a one, I say, cannot possibly fail of being wrought upon by the preaching of the Word, which carries with it all that Evidence of Truth which Reason requires, and which proposes to us such an inexhaustible Store of Blessings to come as the Reward of our Fidelity. To suppose that he may fail, is to suppose him to be what he really is not; for he that can reject that which Reason recommends, must be unreasonable; and he that for the Sake of the Pleasure or Profit of this Life will forego the Happiness of one infinitely better, must be carnally minded. All this is true, and therefore in this Sense it may truly be affirmed of Christ's Sheep, that *no Man can pluck them out of his Hands*. But then this only proves, that so long as they continue to be his Sheep, so long as Men retain those good Dispositions, by which they are prepared to hear his Voice and follow him, that, so long, I say, they cannot be plucked away; and therefore since these Words do not shew that those who are Christ's Sheep may not cease to be so; since our Saviour does not say that those who are meek, humble, and disengaged from this present World, may not by the Temptations of the Devil, and the Deceitfulness of their own fleshly Appetites, become otherwise disposed, this Place will not prove that those who once believe, and are become obedient to the Word of God, cannot fall away and finally perish through their own Carelessness. Our Adversaries make several Exceptions against this Reply, as (r) 1. That *the Argument of Christ supposes that those Sheep which are not taken away, shall have Eternal Life; which, say they, would be false, if they could perish although they be not taken away*. But this Inference is ridiculous: For we do not suppose, nor can it be supposed, that the Sheep of Christ can perish though they be not taken away; what we suppose is, that those who are Christ's Sheep may cease to be Christ's Sheep; and this, I hope, may be true, though it be true that those who are not taken away, and consequently who do not cease to be Christ's Sheep, shall have Eternal Life. But, 2. They say, that *those Sheep which cannot be plucked out of Christ's Hands by the Temptations of any Enemy, cannot cease to be Christ's Sheep, because such a Change cannot happen but by such Temptations*; which would be a very just Conclusion, if by being plucked out of Christ's Hands were meant *ceasing to be his Sheep*. For then indeed our Saviour would have asserted directly, that those who are his Sheep cannot cease to be so. But that this is the Sense of our Saviour's Assertion we utterly deny, and therefore this Argument only begs the Thing that ought to be proved. By being Christ's Sheep, we say, is to be understood the being endued with those Dispositions and Qualifications which are necessary to prepare Men for the Reception of the Gospel. If this be true, then by ceasing to be Christ's Sheep must be understood the having lost those preparatory Dispositions. But by being plucked out of Christ's Hands, is now supposed to be meant the actual and final falling away from the Faith once received; and there is manifestly no Consequence in saying,

(r) Argumentum Christi supponit oves quæ non rapiuntur habituras vitam æternam — quod falsum esset si oves possent perire, etsi non rapiantur. 2. Oves quæ non possunt rapi e manibus Christi, tentationibus ullorum hostium non possunt detinere esse oves, quia nulla talis mutatio fieri posset nisi per aliquam hostium tentationem: 3. Nulla esset promissio Christi — Pastor qui spondet se oves absolute custoditurum & servaturum non liberabit fidem si permittat eas aberrare & perire. *Ibid.* §. 15.

that because a Man cannot by any Temptations be prevailed upon to do this, those preparatory Dispositions being supposed, therefore neither can he by any Temptations lose these preparatory Dispositions. And whereas it is pretended, 3^{dly}, that these Words of our Saviour do contain an absolute Promise of Perseverance to his Sheep, and consequently that this Promise would not be fulfilled if he should suffer any of them finally to fall away, it appears, I think, very plainly from the whole, that this Pretence has no manner of Foundation. It does not appear that they contain any Promise of Perseverance at all, for they may be only an Enforcement of the Promise of Eternal Life, as I have shewn. But supposing that they do relate to our Continuance in the Faith, they may still be, not a Promise, but a Declaration of the Certainty of that Continuance, upon Supposition of such and such Qualifications. This Argument therefore is every way wide of the thing in question.

§. VII. WHAT has been said upon this Text may serve for an Answer to what is alledged, Thirdly, from *John*, 6. 37, 39. *All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me.* For *to be given* of the the Father signifies the same thing with *being drawn* of the Father (*ver.* 44.) as has been (*s*) already shewn. And *to be drawn* of the Father signifies to be prepared or fitted for the Reception of the Gospel by the preventing Grace of God, as has also been proved. Now this Preparedness consisting, as has likewise been shewn, in being endued with a meek and disinterested Temper of Mind, those who are given of the Father will be the same with Christ's Sheep, and the Sense of the Place the same with the preceding, where our Saviour says, that his Sheep *hear his Voice and follow him, i. e.* become his obedient Disciples. This Text therefore being no more than a Declaration what will be the certain, and (morally speaking) the necessary Effect of that Disposition, upon the Account of which Men are said *to be given of the Father* (to wit, that it will lead them to embrace the Gospel when once proposed to them) will not prove that this Disposition may not be lost, and consequently can be no Argument for the Necessity of Perseverance. But, say they, our Saviour, at *ver.* 39, declares it to be *the Will of the Father who sent him, that of all which he had given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last Day.* Very true; and so it is said of God universally, that he *is not willing that ANY should perish, but that all should come to Repentance*, when yet it is too too manifest that many do perish because they will not be brought to Repentance. This willing therefore, as in the latter Case it cannot, so in the former it possibly may not signify an absolute willing, but such a willing as is consistent with the Liberty of Mankind. God willeth that all Men should come to Repentance, *i. e.* he most earnestly desires it, and would be highly pleased if they would do so, yet he doth not force them to it, but leaves them to their own Choice, whether they will or will not, under the Use of those Means which he hath afforded them. Even so God willeth that all whom he giveth to Christ, all whom he has prepared by a meek and teachable Disposition to embrace the Gospel, should, by preserving that good Disposition entire, persevere in the Faith, and be made Partakers of Everlasting Life. But it is not necessary to suppose that he willeth this absolutely, or that he doth not leave them under a Possibility of losing this good Disposition, if they shall grow remiss and negligent in the Use of those Means which are necessary for the Preservation of it.

§. VIII. I AM not insensible that there is one Place, in which the Phrase of being *given of the Father*, is used in a Sense different from that which has just now been laid down. The Place I mean is *John* 17. 12. *Those that thou*

gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the Son of Perdition. This is a fourth Text alledged by these Divines to prove the Necessity of Perseverance. But in vain. For these Words relate solely to the Twelve Apostles, who are here in a more eminent and peculiar manner said to have been given of the Father. The four preceding Chapters are spent entirely in giving an Account of some private Converse that our blessed Lord had with his Apostles, and these Words are part of a Prayer which, during that time, he put up for his Apostles, and for them only, as appears plainly from these Expressions: *As thou hast sent me into the World, even so have I also sent them into the World,* ver. 18. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for all those who shall believe in me through their Word,* ver. 20. Here our Saviour distinguishes those whom he was then praying for, from Believers in general, and expressly declares them to be those whom *he had sent into the World*, as his Father *had sent him*, and *through whose Word* the rest were to believe, *i. e.* he declares them to be his Twelve Apostles; for these Words are exactly parallel to those Chap. 20. 21. *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you*, which were spoke to the Apostles only. Now concerning these very same Persons it was that our Saviour said. *Those that thou gavest me have I kept, and none of them is lost, but the Son of Perdition*; which latter Words relating manifestly to the Apostasy of Judas, make it so plain that the Apostles only were here spoken of, as that nothing can be plainer. In what Sense it is that the Twelve were peculiarly said to be given of the Father the 6th Verse will inform us; *I have manifested thy Name to those whom thou gavest me out of the World*, which seems to denote that the Apostles were therefore said to be given of the Father, because they were by him called from their Worldly Concerns and Employments principally to attend upon the preaching of the Gospel. But however this be, these Words cannot possibly make good the Point which is now contended for. For, 1. Supposing it were true that the Apostles could not any of them have apostatized from the Faith, it will not follow from hence that common Christians cannot. For the Apostles had many Privileges peculiar to themselves; and this, had it been a Benefit which actually they did enjoy, might possibly have been of that Number. But, 2. Our Saviour does not say even of these, that none of them possibly could have been lost; he only says, that in Fact none of them had been lost. 3. And yet farther, he does not affirm this without Exception. For the *Son of Perdition* he says was lost, and yet it is manifest that he was of the Number of those who were given him of the Father.

§. IX. A FIFTH Text is that of the Apostle, 1 John 3. 9. *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit Sin, for his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God.* But this Argument, if it proves any thing, proves a great deal too much; for it proves that a regenerate Man cannot fall into a sinful State, which certainly every Man is under who is guilty of any one deliberate Act of Wickedness which he hath not repented of; whereas these Men grant, that those who have embraced the Faith, and are become regenerate, may be guilty of many wilful and deliberate Sins, only they say that they cannot finally remain impenitent in them. I know well enough that they pretend, that by committing Sin the Apostles does not mean barely the falling into a sinful State, but the continuing in that State so long as that *Sin shall get the Dominion over them*; which, whether it be true or not, will be fully considered in (t) another Place. But admitting it were so, the Argument from this Text will yet fall a great way short of the Conclusion to be made good. For all that the Apostle says is, that a regenerate Man cannot sin; that is, so long as he continues to be regenerate, which is manifest, because his be-

(t) See the Discourse of Regeneration.

ing regenerate is given as the Reason why he cannot sin. But the Conclusion to be proved is, that he who is once regenerate cannot die in Sin, and so perish everlastingly; which will by no means follow, unless it were true what the Apostle does not assert, *viz.* that he who is once regenerate cannot afterwards become unregenerate.

§. X. SIXTHLY, They alledge those Words of St. Paul, Rom. 8. 35. & seq. *Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword? — Nay, in all these things we are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* These indeed are very high Expressions, and shew that the Apostle was under the firmest Assurance that he should persevere in the Faith and Obedience of the Gospel, in spite of the greatest and most vehement Temptations to the contrary. But upon what was it that this great Assurance was founded? Why, the 18th Verse will inform us; *I reckon that the Sufferings of this Present Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us.* It was you see, the Prospect of a Life to come which raised in him a brave and undaunted Spirit, upon the Sense an Experience whereof he could firmly pronounce, that nothing should or could be able to separate him from the Love of Christ. And who can doubt whether so long as these Hopes remained upon his Mind in their full Strength and Vigor, whether whilst he had so great a Value for the Glories to be revealed, as to account his present Sufferings as nothing when compared to them; who, I say, can doubt whether whilst he was thus disposed, it was not, morally speaking, impossible for him to fall away from the Obedience of the Gospel? But does the Apostle say, either here or any where else, that it was impossible for him not to be thus disposed? No he affirms no such thing, nor can any such thing in reason be pretended; for certainly it is a Work which of all others requires the greatest Care and Diligence to gain such an Ascendant over our selves, as that the bare Hopes and Expectations of a Reward to come, shall upon all Occasions out-weigh those present Satisfactions that this World affords us. This, I say, is a very hard and difficult Work, but he, through the Grace of God, had effected it. He knew, he found within himself, that *the World was crucified to him, and he unto the World*; and under the Sense of this mighty Conquest he boldly challenges the whole Creation. Yet as this Victory was gained at first through much Labour, by *Watchings*, by *Fastings*, and by *Prayers Night and Day* (frequent mention whereof we have in his Epistles) so it was to be kept by the same Methods afterwards; and therefore he tells us (in Words which are utterly inconsistent with his being under an absolute Impossibility of miscarrying) that he still *kept under his Body, and brought it into Subjection, lest that by any means when he had preached to others, he himself should be Cast-away.* 1 Cor. 9. 27.

§. XI. THESE are the principal of those Texts which are brought to support the Doctrine of the Impossibility of falling from Grace. There are some other less considerable, which I do not think it needful to mention, but which those who have Leisure and Inclination to consider them, may find in the same Place from whence I gathered these. As to the Absurdities with which the contrary Doctrine is supposed to be attended, they are (u) branched out into a great Variety (to make them appear, I suppose,

(u) Posita Apostasia sanctorum, 1. Suspenduntur decreta Dei — 2. Rumpitur catena mediorum salutis — 3. Evangelii doctrina in meras conjecturas convertitur, & fiducia & certitudo salutis afflictis conscientis prorsus eripitur. 4. Distinctio tollitur inter Reprobos & Electos — 5. Tota œconomia salutis inanis reddi-

so much the more formidable) but in reality they are no more than these, which it will be sufficient barely to mention, viz. 1. That if one Saint may apostatize, and perish finally, then it will be possible that all should, and then it would have been possible that Christ might have died in vain. 2. That the Doctrine of the Gospel is hereby turned into mere Conjecture, and the certain and full Assurance of Salvation wholly taken away from afflicted Consciences. As to the first of these Objections, it has been already answered; and as to the latter, it is very absurdly offered. For our Principles suppose the Doctrine of the Gospel to be certain as well as theirs; and if it be certain, it is not then mere Conjecture. Now the Doctrine of the Gospel we take to be this, that all those shall certainly and undoubtedly be saved at the last Day, who have performed those Conditions upon which Salvation is promised. So far therefore as a Man is certain of this, so far he may be certain of his Salvation, and no farther. If they will call this taking away all certain Assurance of Salvation from afflicted Consciences, I cannot tell how to help it. It is such a Certainty as God has thought fit to grant us; and that Conscience, I think, is deservedly afflicted, which, not content with this, shall desire another Certainty, which, according to the present Constitution of the Christian Covenant, it cannot have. But, 3. The greatest Objection of all is, That unless we suppose and grant the Impossibility of the Saints falling, the Doctrine of absolute Election cannot be maintained, which Consequence I do again very freely own; and I am so far even from wishing to remove it, that I think it a great Argument of the Truth of our Principles, that by them this Doctrine is so effectually overthrown. This Doctrine, I say, which has been raised out of a few obscure Places of Scripture, in Opposition to the Sense of many plain ones, which contradicts the whole Scope and Tenor of the Gospel Covenant, which cuts the Sinews of all Religion in general, and in its Consequences destroys the Necessity of all Care and Endeavours after Righteousness. †

§. XII. AND now the whole of what has been offered upon the Subject of irresistible Grace being fairly considered, the Reader, I hope, will find it necessary to agree with me in this general Inference, viz. "That the Operations of the Holy Spirit upon our Minds are only Helps or Assistances:" That the Holy Spirit doth not act upon us in such a manner as to do all himself that is necessary to be done in order to our becoming holy, but that in Conversion at first, and in Perseverance in Holiness afterwards, our own Endeavours, by the Use of those Means which GOD has appointed, must concur; which being supposed, as on the one hand we ought not to doubt of Success, so on the other hand if they be wanting, those good Effects will as surely be wanting too, as if the HOLY SPIRIT did nothing at all, and we were left, if it had been possible, to do all for our selves.

Part I.
P. 314

tur. Nam si possibile est fidelem omnem deficere a fide, fieri potest ut nulli omnino sint Electi; nam si unus excidit, quare non alter? Et eadem ratione cur non omnes? Sic nulla potest esse Ecclesia, & Christus gratia esset mortuus. *Ibid.* §. 28.

C H A P. XVI.

Some Practical Inferences drawn from the whole.

P. 324. §. I. “**T**HUS I have through the Blessing of God, finished what I under-
 “ took, and given you a plain Account of what I believe to be
 “ the true Sense of the Holy Scriptures concerning those Operations of the
 “ Holy Spirit, which are promised in the Gospel to all Ages of the Church.
 “ As for the Profitableness of this Discourse, it cannot be better judged of than
 “ by that which should be the End of all Writings of this Nature, *viz.* the
 “ promoting of true Godliness. And certainly if the Doctrine of the Opera-
 “ tions of the Spirit be that which I have here offered to your Consideration,
 “ it does apparently render all wicked Men inexcusable that live under the
 “ Gospel; and makes highly for the Encouragement of Religion. This will
 “ appear by surveying some of the principal Heads of this Discourse; for by
 “ so doing, it may easily be shewn that there is nothing wanting to make the
 “ Promise of the Holy Spirit, as it has been explained, the most powerful Mo-
 “ tive to the Study of Vertue and Godliness, that it can be supposed to be.
 “ For

P. 325. §. II. “**F**IRST, There is nothing wanting in respect of the End of this Pro-
 “ mise, and of those Effects for the producing of which the Operations of the
 “ Holy Spirit are promised. For they are all Christian Vertues whatsoever; all
 “ Sorts of Qualifications that are needful to our Eternal Happiness. And there-
 “ fore we need not doubt to strive against that Sin which does most *easily beset*
 “ *us*; nor sit down in Despair of obtaining that Grace or Vertue which is most
 “ contrary to our corrupt Affections and Customs. For if God will give the
 “ Holy Spirit for all needful Purposes, he will bestow a more plentiful Mea-
 “ sure of his Grace, for the subduing of that Sin, and the gaining of that Ver-
 “ tue, because here his Assistance is most needful; and he that hath promised
 “ his Spirit to answer all our Needs, will not deny us when we ask him to
 “ supply the greatest of all.

Ibid.

§. III. “**S**ECONDLY, There is nothing wanting in the Promise of the Holy
 “ Spirit to make it such a Motive, in respect of those to whom the Promise
 “ is made, because it is made to every one that believes the Gospel; to every
 “ one I say, under a possible Condition; so that none of us can have the least
 “ reason to fear that we are shut out of it, unless we wilfully exclude our
 “ selves. Besides, the Condition of obtaining special Grace from God, being
 “ that of importunate asking; we are hereby moved to earnest and frequent
 “ Prayers, which you know is one Branch of pious Endeavour. And then the
 “ Condition of more plentiful Communications of the Divine Spirit, being a
 “ careful Improvement of those Measures of Grace which we have already ob-
 “ tained; this also is a plain and powerful Motive to every Christian that has
 “ proceeded more or less in the way of Salvation, to be as fruitful as he can
 “ in every good Work, and to follow after Holiness, *looking diligently lest he fail*
 “ *of the Grace of God.*

P. 326. §. IV. “**T**HIRDLY and lastly; There is nothing wanting in this Promise to
 “ make it a Motive to the Study of Godliness, if we consider the Manner of
 “ the Holy Spirit’s Operations.” For 1. Since the Manner of the Spirit’s Ope-
 “ rations is such, as that all Vertues and Graces are nevertheless the proper and
 “ * genuine Effects of God’s Word, and of our own Endeavours, * this is a great
 “ Motive to us to be diligent in reading the Holy Scriptures, searching there *what*
 “ *the Will of the Lord is*, and applying to our selves those Arguments for, and

En-

Encouragements to, Obedience and a holy Life, which are there laid before us. Furthermore, it shows how necessary it is that we be diligent and watchful over our selves in every State or Condition of Life, that so the Temptations of the World may not prevail against us, and *the Grace of God be received in vain.* † 2. Since the Holy Spirit does not produce these Effects in us all at once, but in such an Order, and by those Degrees, that suit with our Capacities and Qualifications; “this Consideration may be of great use to two very different †
 “Sorts of Men. As first, to those who have been long accustomed to a sin-
 “ful Course of Life, and think it impossible to recover themselves, although
 “they have the Opportunities of Amendment before them. For it happens
 “sometimes, that such Men wish they had taken an early Care to live in the
 “Fear of God, and the Practice of Religion and Vertue; but they believe it
 “is now in vain to strive against those Habits which are so deeply rooted in
 “their Minds; and so they abandon themselves to Carelessness and Despera-
 “tion. The reason of this commonly is, that when at any time they have
 “attempted their own Reformation, and purposed to lead a new Life, they
 “have soon found themselves surprized again by their former Temptations, and
 “carried away as strongly by their sensual Appetites as ever they were before;
 “which makes them conclude, it is to no Purpose to take any more Pains with
 “themselves; as if because their Freedom from the Servitude of Sin could not
 “be effected in a few Moments, therefore it cannot be effected at all. It many
 “times hinders a good Beginning, that a Man finds he cannot become a Con-
 “vert in an Instant, and thence concludes that it can never be better with
 “him than it is at present; which he will be the more ready to do, if he has
 “been taught that Conversion is a thing that comes by a Snatch, and an in-
 “stantaneous Act of the the Spirit. For if this were true, it were then in
 “vain for an habitual Sinner at least to attempt his own Recovery, since a
 “Custom in Sin cannot be suddenly broken without a Miracle, but must be
 “worn away by contrary Practices, or not at all. It will require some Time,
 “and much Patience, to unlearn a way of Life that is grown customary and
 “natural, and to make the contrary habitual and easy; but by Assiduity and
 “Constancy, the thing may be done. Therefore if a Man has entertained
 “any serious Thoughts of Repentance, he ought not to discourage himself,
 “though he finds his Affections to Sin hard to be put off, nor to give up
 “himself for a lost Person when he is again overtaken by a Temptation, but
 “to renew his Resolutions more vigorously, and to pray more frequently and
 “earnestly; and to keep on thus in a way of Well-doing: For there is not
 “the least Doubt but by this means every Day something will be done to the
 “bettering of his Mind, and the making of a good Life more easy and ready
 “to him, till he has gained the true *Liberty of the Sons of God.* And as this
 “Consideration is of good use to prevail against despairing, if a Man that has
 “yet the Opportunity, is desirous to amend his Life; so also it is a good An-
 “tidote against the Madness of deferring our Repentance upon a Presumption
 “that we can repent and turn to God when we please. For if it be not in
 “the Power of a wicked Man whilst he is thus flattering himself, to repent
 “this present Moment, he has no Reason to think that he may suddenly re-
 “pent at any time afterward. The most that is in his Power at present, is to
 “do something in order to Repentance; but that is not to repent; the utmost
 “he can do is to begin well, but that is not doing the Thing. Now the longer
 “he is thus trifling with himself, his evil Habits contract more Stubbornness, and
 “it will require more time to break them, and yet he has less time to do it
 “than he had before. Nor is it likely that he will begin hereafter while he has
 “any time before him; for the reason why a Man defers his Reformation to
 “another time, is not because he intends to begin then, but because he has no
 “Mind to begin now; and unless he be then in a better Mind than he is at pre-
 “sent, he will certainly defer his Repentance still; nor is there any Probability
 “that he will find himself better disposed after he has added Iniquity to Iniquity,
 “and

“ and made himself *more a Child of the Devil* than he was before. And indeed it
 “ commonly happens that they who cheat themselves in this foolish manner, run
 “ out their Presumption to the End of their Lives, till the Terrors of Death
 “ make them serious; and then I fear ’tis commonly too late to make a good
 “ Beginning.” 3. Since the Holy Spirit operates upon us in a most familiar
 way, so that his Motions are not discernable from the natural Operations of
 our own Minds; this is a good Preservative against “ Fanatical Delusions. We
 “ must not pretend that the Spirit inciteth us to such an Action,” or suggests
 to us such a Notion, and thence presently conclude it to be good or true; but
 we must first see what Reason and Revelation teaches, and from the Agreeable-
 ness of our Doctrines and Practices with that, infer that we are directed by the
 Spirit of God. “ God does not now give the Spirit to justify Men, but to assist them
 “ in that which is good, and he hath shewed us what is good, partly by the Light
 “ of Nature which is common to all Men, and compleatly by the publick Re-
 “ velation of his Will contained in the Scriptures. Wherefore since the Operations
 “ of the Spirit are imperceptible by us, and merely an Object of our Faith, we
 “ have no other way of assuring our selves that we follow the Guidance of the
 “ Spirit, but by following God’s Word, which therefore is the Rule we must
 “ always keep close to, and by which all the Motions of our Minds must be
 “ tryed. When we find our selves inclined to that which is good, when we
 “ are bent upon doing God’s Will, when we perform our Duty, and govern
 “ our Actions and Opinions by this Rule, then we may conclude that we are
 “ acted by a Divine Spirit, and that therefore we have Occasion given us
 “ of humble and thankful Praises. But if we forsake the steady Rules of our
 “ Duty, written upon our Hearts, or in the Bible, and take every violent Im-
 “ pulse we feel within our selves for a Suggestion of the Holy Ghost, we may
 “ easily mistake a brutish Inclination, or a Suggestion of the Devil, for a Di-
 “ vine Inspiration, since no Sort of Men are acted with a more sensible and
 “ impetuous Zeal, than they who are strongly led by the Devil and their own
 “ corrupt Affections. I shall conclude this Point with observing farther, that
 “ we resist the Holy Spirit of God many times when we do not think of it,
 “ because we do not feel that supernatural Impression that is made upon us.
 “ And thus we quench the Motions of the Spirit very often, when we imagine
 “ that we only quarrel with our own Thoughts, reject the good Counsels of
 “ a Friend, the Exhortations of a Minister, or the Rebukes of our own Con-
 “ sciences. Now if we could hear the Holy Spirit dissuading us from any
 “ Wickedness, as sensibly as when a good Man speaks to us, we should not
 “ dare surely to entertain one Thought more of going forward. A Tempta-
 “ tion could no more prevail against us if we were thus admonished, than if
 “ God should speak to us from Heaven with an audible Voice in these Words,
 “ *O do not that wicked thing which I hate.* But God doth not use this Method
 “ with us, because we are here to live by Faith; because he will prove us whe-
 “ ther we believe his Word or not. Therefore if it be plain from the holy
 “ Scriptures, that when we are sinning against the clear Convictions of our
 “ Duty, when we are baffling any good Exhortations and Counsels, and our
 “ own Hopes of Heaven, or the Fears of Hell, or the Force of any seasonable
 “ good Thought tending to Repentance; we do then as really contradict the
 “ Persuasions of the Blessed Spirit, as if we heard his Voice sounding in our
 “ Ears, shall we not be as much afraid to do the former, as we should be to
 “ do the latter? It will not be admitted in our Excuse, that we did not think
 “ of rebelling against the holy Spirit: For our not thinking of it is a great
 “ Fault, since we have reason to believe that every Sin we commit against the
 “ Checks of Conscience, has that Aggravation; and why should we imagine
 “ that one Fault will excuse another? Wherefore, if we cannot but acknow-
 “ ledge, that the *doing Despight to the Spirit of Grace* must needs add an heavy
 “ Weight to every Sin we commit; the Consideration of this Matter, if we
 “ have any Reverence to God,” or Concern for our selves, “ cannot fail of
 “ making

“ making all good Counfels profitable to us; of giving Strength to all our
 “ good Purposes, and making us careful to improve, by all Reasons that are
 “ proper to convince us, by all Examples that are fit to instruct us, and by all
 “ Opportunities of serious Reflection upon our selves; because the holy Spirit
 “ doth conspire with such familiar Methods as these are, to produce his Graces
 “ in us.”

§. V. UPON the whole then it appears, “ That the Promise of the holy P. 326
 “ Spirit, as it is expressed in Scripture, is in every respect a most prevalent
 “ Motive to the Study of Piety and Vertue. And since it was my Design at
 “ first to recover it to this Use, out of the Hands of those Men who have
 “ made it good for nothing: I could not conclude better than with shewing
 “ you wherein the Force of this Promise lies to make us all careful to *work out*
 “ *our own Salvation.*”



F I N I S.

By HENRY STEBBINS

Written in the Year, 1722.

"making all good Councils profitable to us; of giving strength to all our good purposes, and making us careful to improve, by all Reasons that are proper to convince us, by all Examples that are fit to instruct us, and by all Opportunities of serious Reflection upon our selves; because the holy Spirit abideth constant with such familiar Methods as these are, to produce his Graces in us."

§. VI. Upon the whole then it appears, "That the Promise of the holy Spirit, as it is explicated in Scripture, is in every respect a most prevalent Motive to the Study of Piety and Virtue. And since it was my Design at first to recover it to this Use, out of the Hands of those Men who have made it good for nothing: I could not conclude better than with thanking you which the Force of this Promise has made us all careful to work at."



DISCOURSES

UPON SEVERAL

SUBJECTS;

Viz.

REGENERATION,

OR

THE NEW BIRTH;

IN TWO PARTS.

JUSTIFYING

OR

SAVING FAITH.

GOSPEL HOLINESS,

OR

SANCTIFICATION.

FERVENCY IN PRAYER, *and the*
ASSISTANCE *of the* SPIRIT *in relation to it.*

INTENDED

As a SUPPLEMENT to the ABRIDGEMENT of Dr.
CLAGET'S Discourse concerning *The Operations of the HOLY*
SPIRIT.

By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.

Written in the Year, 1722.

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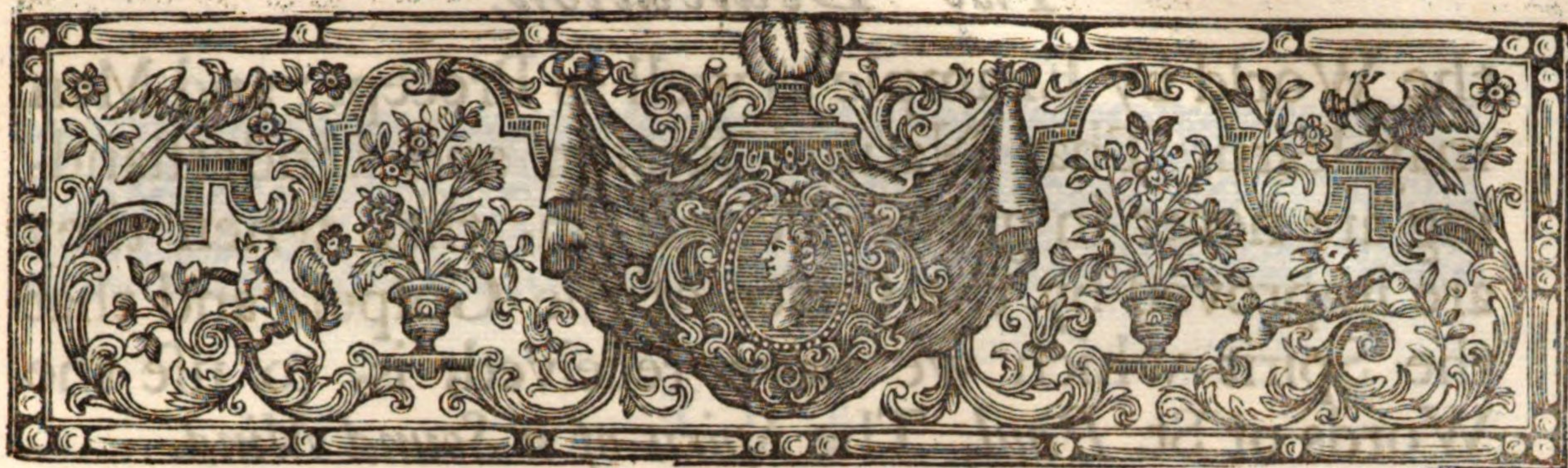
ASSISTANCE OF THE SPIRIT IN PRAYER, AND THE
FERTILITY IN PRAYER, AND THE

INTENDED

As a SUPPLEMENT to the ARRANGEMENT of Dr.
CLARK'S DISCOURSES CONCERNING THE OPERATION OF THE HOLY
SPIRIT.

By HENRY STEBBING, M.A.

Written in the Year 1722.



TO HIS GRACE

WILLIAM
LORD ARCH-BISHOP OF
CANTERBURY.

May it Please Your GRACE,

YOUR GRACE'S Favourable Reception of Part of this Work published some time ago, hath embolden'd me to put the Whole under Your Protection. The Subject here under Consideration, is of the greatest Importance to Religion. To know that we are under the Influence of God's Holy Spirit, is not only in It-self One Great Motive to True Piety, but is that which gives Life and Vigor to all the Rest. When this Great Article is cleared from the Corruptions of Enthusiasm on the one side, and from the Contempts of Infidelity on the other, we shall find it to be the best Foundation of a Reasonable Service to God. This, my LORD, is the Truth I would promote in the following Papers; and by Placing Your GRACE'S Name in the Front of them, the Doctrine will come recommended to

The Dedication.

the World by Example as well as Precept; and Men may learn, That Natural Reason and Understanding are never in greater Perfection, than when they are improved by the Grace of the Gospel, and that the Spirit which we have received, is, to use the Words of St. *Paul*, *The Spirit of a Sound Mind*.

YOUR GRACE's long Acquaintance with the late Excellent Dr. CLAGET, and Your great and just Esteem for him, make it unnecessary for me to say any thing of this Work, as far as it is His. My own Part in it, may, I am sensible, stand in need of many favourable Allowances; and yet it comes with some Confidence to Your GRACE, relying on this Experienced Truth, That the most Polite and Just Writers, who have no Reason to fear the severest Judges, are always themselves the tenderest, and most ready to overlook the Imperfections of others. I am,

My LORD,

Your GRACE's most Dutiful

and most Obedient Son

and Servant,

HENRY STEBBING.

THE



T H E

P R E F A C E.

IN Performance of my Promise, I now offer to the Publick, the ensuing Tracts, which through the Affinity of the Subject, I thought necessary towards making the Treatise concerning the Operations of the Holy Spirit, compleat. I have nothing to acquaint the Reader with, but this; That the first Part of the Discourse concerning Regeneration, and that concerning Gospel-Holiness, are the only Pieces in which I have had any Help from Dr. Claget. The rest I must be answerable for my-self; though I ought not so far to claim that concerning Justification, as my own, as not to acknowledge my-self greatly indebted to the late Learned and Excellent Bishop Bull, whose Notion I have mainly followed. I now submit the Whole to the Reader's Judgment; and if what I have done may be of any Use to Young Beginners, towards leading them, by a short and easy Way, to judge rightly of some important and (as they have been made) not less difficult Points in Divinity, I shall think my Time and Pains well bestowed.

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DISCOURSE III.

OF GOSPEL HOLINESS; or SANCTIFICATION.

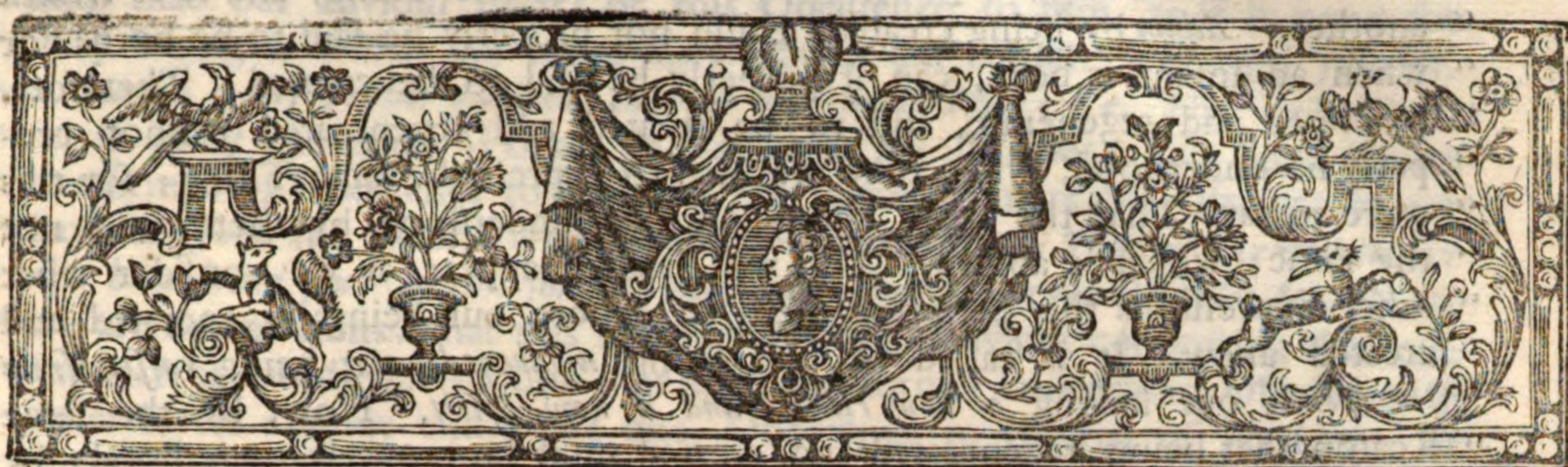
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DISCOURSE I.

CONCERNING REGENERATION.

O R,

THE NEW BIRTH.

PART I.

*Wherein is shewn, What the SCRIPTURE means by being
REGENERATE.*

§. I. **T**HAT we are Regenerated by the Operations of the Holy Spirit; and that it is necessary that we should be so, in order to our being qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven; is a Thing not to be doubted of among Christians. “For our Saviour saith, That *except a Man be BORN AGAIN, (or ‡ from Above) he ‡ cannot see the Kingdom of God,* John iii. 3. And this Regeneration he likewise ascribeth to the Operation of the Holy Spirit; *Except a Man be born of — the SPIRIT, he cannot enter, &c.*” The Point is, What it is to be regenerated, or born again: And this I shall now endeavour to determine; First, By shewing what the Scripture means by being Regenerate: And, Secondly, By refuting what some Modern Divines have taught concerning this Matter.

§. II. FIRST, I am to shew, What the Scripture means by being Regenerate: But before I enter upon this, it will be proper for me to remove one Mistake which lies in my Way (and which, probably, has been one great Occasion of those many wild and extravagant Notions which have been brought into this Subject;) viz. “That these Expressions, *To be Born again, To be a New Creature,* and the like; do properly and literally signify that which is intended by them.” The Vanity of this Pretence will very sufficiently appear from this (a) one Observation; viz. That whereas “all do confess, that these Expressions are used to denote one and the same Thing; properly and literally they do

(a) To this Reason our Author adds several more: But, I think, he has over-labour'd the Point; and, therefore, I omit them.

“ not denote one and the same Thing, but divers Things. That they properly
 “ denote divers Things, is plain, For, *to be born* is one Thing, and *to be created*
 “ another. *Adam* by being created, could not properly be said to be born; nor
 “ when an Infant is born, can it properly be said to be created. Therefore,
 “ to create and regenerate, and to be created and regenerated cannot pro-
 “ perly be understood, when they are used to express the same Thing; for this
 “ were to say, That the same Thing is to be understood by them, and not
 “ the same; which is absurd. This will farther appear, if we consider what
 “ other Expressions the Scripture useth to denote our being regenerated and
 “ created anew. It is called (*b*) our being *awakened*; our being *raised from*
 “ *the Dead*; our having *a new Heart, and a new Spirit*. Now, by the same
 “ Reason that being regenerated and created must be properly understood; by
 “ the same Reason, I say, all those other Expressions must be properly under-
 “ stood too; and then, what monstrous Absurdities do we run into! No Man
 “ can properly be raised from the Dead, that was not created before. How then
 “ can it properly be said, that a Man is raised from the Dead, and created by
 “ the same Act? No Man can properly be said to be awakened, who is not
 “ alive. How then is it possible, that to give Life and awaken, should be the
 * “ same Thing in the literal Sense of the Words? ” * Or, What can be more
 † absurd, than to suppose, that in Regeneration a Man has literally a New Heart,
 † and a New Spirit? †

§. III. THESE Expressions, therefore, are to be understood, not literally and
 properly, but, figuratively and metaphorically. And as such, they may all of
 them, without any Absurdity at all, be used to express a Regenerate State.
 * For there is (as will be shewn hereafter) some Resemblance between every
 one of the Things properly signified by these Expressions and a Regenerate
 State; and it is by no means necessary, in order to justify a figurative Use of
 any Word or Phrase, that the Comparison should exactly hold in every Parti-
 † cular. † Thus much, therefore, being premised, I come now directly to shew, What
 P. 117. the Scripture means by being Regenerate or Born again: And I say in general,
 That, “ in its utmost Meaning, it signifies, to become a sincere Profelyte or
 “ Disciple of our Lord Jesus. I shall first briefly shew, What is meant by being
 “ a sincere Disciple of Jesus Christ; and then prove That to be the Meaning
 “ of a Regenerate State.”

§. IV. “ To be a sincere Profelyte or Disciple of Jesus Christ, consists then
 P. 118, “ in these Two Things; viz. 1. In being baptized as our Saviour requires. And,
 119. “ 2. In making good the Profession of Baptism; which is to believe in Christ,
 “ and obey his Commandments. This is clearly answerable to that Rule
 “ which our blessed Lord gave to his Apostles, according to which they were
 “ to make Men his Disciples. *Go ye, therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing*
 “ *them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; i. e. ad-*
 “ *mitting them by Baptism into the Church, and thereby ingaging them to*
 “ *believe, and profess their Faith in, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and of*
 “ *that Doctrine to which they have born Record. Teaching them to observe all*
 “ *things whatsoever I have commanded you; i. e. and by the same Baptism in-*
 “ *gaging them to obey my Commands. That, therefore, which makes us sin-*
 “ *cere Disciples of Jesus Christ, is thus to believe and obey, as we are by*
 “ *Baptism ingaged. Now because to obey the Commands of Christ, what-*
 “ *ever we lose or suffer by it, is the clearest Proof we can give to our-selves*
 “ *or others, that we do, in good Earnest, own him to be our Lord and Master,*

(*b*) It must be taken Notice, That these Expressions do not any of them, nor were they supposed by our Author to reach the Whole of what is meant by being Regenerate. But if they express any Part of it (as most certainly they do), the Argument will be just the same.

“ and that we do heartily believe him to be the Son of God; therefore we,
 “ find, that our Saviour speaks of this Obedience to him, as if it were the
 “ only Thing in which our being his Disciples did consist. For thus *John* xv.
 “ 8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much Fruit; i. e.* That ye be fruit-
 “ ful in Piety and good Works; *so shall ye be my Disciples.* The same Thing
 “ is affirmed of Obedience to one, but that a very remarkable, Precept of our
 “ Saviour, *John* xiii. 34. *A new Commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another*
 “ *as I have loved you. By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, &c.* Now
 “ we are not to think, that this last Saying of our Saviour concerning that one
 “ Instance of Obedience to him; or that the former concerning Obedience in
 “ general; do exclude either the one, Obedience to the rest of his Laws, or
 “ the other, believing him to be the Son of God, from being necessary to make
 “ us his true Disciples: But that, by such an high Act of Vertue as to love
 “ our Brethren as Christ loved us, it may strongly be concluded, that we will
 “ not stick at any thing he requires of us; and that our yielding a sincere O-
 “ bedience to all his Commands, does clearly suppose, that we believe him to
 “ be the Son of God, and all his Promises to be true. Hence our Saviour does
 “ not admit that we can be his Disciples, if we do not intirely submit our-
 “ selves to him. *If any Man (says he) come to me, and hate not his Father*
 “ *and Mother, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple; i. e.* Unless
 “ he loves God, and Truth, and Goodness so much more than all his world-
 “ ly Interests, even his Life it-self, that he may be said to hate these Things,
 “ when his Love to them is compared with his Love to Christ, he cannot be
 “ a Disciple of Christ; *i. e.* He cannot be a true Disciple of Christ; he can-
 “ not answer the Profession of Baptism whilst it is thus with him. For, *if*
 “ *ye continue in my Word; i. e.* To do according to it, whatever befalls you
 “ for so doing in this World; *then are ye my Disciples* INDEED, as our Lord
 “ tells us, *John* viii. 31.

§. V. “ THE best Notion then that we can frame of a true Disciple of P. 119
 “ Christ, and that to which we are guided by Christ himself, is, That he is ¹²⁰
 “ one who so firmly believes Jesus to be the Son of God, and that all his
 “ Promises are true, as to be led thereby to love him above all Things”;
 “ to yeild himself up to him by Baptism, and thence-forward to pay “an hearty
 “ Obedience to all his Commandments. I am now to prove, That the State
 “ of Regeneration means no more, than to become such a Disciple of Christ
 “ as I have described.” And this, I think, may be very plainly argued from this
 “ general Observation; *viz.* “That unless we be regenerate, we cannot see the
 “ Kingdom of God; and withal, that if we be regenerate, we have all that is
 “ necessary to qualify us for that Kingdom.” This is granted on all hands:
 “ And it is,” or must also be “acknowledged, that it is equally necessary and
 “ sufficient for this End, that we be the true Disciples of Jesus Christ. For *he*
 “ *that BELIEVETH, and is BAPTIZED, shall be saved. And Christ is the Author*
 “ *of eternal Salvation to them that OBEY him.* Now from hence, I say, it fol-
 “ lows, by undeniable Consequence, That Regeneration,” and whatever other
 “ Metaphorical Expressions are equivalent to it, “do signify nothing else but
 “ a Man’s being” a true Disciple of Jesus Christ. “For if Regeneration signi-
 “ fies any other State, then, *ist.*” To be a true Disciple of Jesus Christ, “is
 “ not a sufficient Qualification for pardon of Sin and eternal Happiness, con-
 “ trary to those clear Texts now mentioned. For, besides this, that other State
 “ supposed to be meant by Regeneration, would be necessary. And, 2. (which
 “ is equally contrary to the Scripture)” To be a true Disciple of Jesus Christ,
 “ would not so much as be necessary to qualify us for Salvation; since that
 “ other State, supposed to be meant by Regeneration, would be sufficient with-
 “ out it.”

* §. VI. * BUT to come to Particulars. There will be little room to doubt what is meant by being Regenerate, when we have seen how our Saviour himself has explained that Phrase. After having told *Nicodemus*, John iii. 3. That *except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*; he adds, Ver. 5. *Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* This latter Verse, you see, sets forth the (c) Particulars of that New Birth, which in the former our Saviour had spoken of under general Terms. So that if these Particulars do constitute the Whole of what is meant by being a true Disciple of Jesus Christ, and no more; it will follow (Christ himself being his own Interpreter) that to be Regenerate, signifies no more, than being a true Disciple of Jesus Christ. And that this is the Truth of the Case, I shall now endeavour to make appear, by shewing, First, That *to be born of Water*, signifies, the being received or admitted as Profelytes to Christ by Baptism. And, Secondly, That *to be born of the Spirit*, denotes, that Love and Submission to Christ wrought in us by the Spirit, which leads to Obedience to all his Commandments. †

P. 136, §. VII. FIRST then, I say; *To be born of Water*, signifies, the being received or admitted as a Profelyte to Christ by Baptism. "Some, I know, there are, 137. " of whom *Grotius* is one, who conceive, that by an *ἐν ὕδατι*, these Words " signify, The *sanctifying or cleansing Spirit of God.*" Our Saviour, he tells us, (d) *doth not here speak of Baptism*, but only alludes to it: "Just as he supposeth " him to allude to the Eucharist in those Words, *Except ye eat the Flesh of the* " *Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you*, John vi. 53." * But, † besides that this Interpretation is intirely (e) new, † There are these Two Reasons to be given why it ought not to be admitted of; viz. 1. That "Baptism " was a Ceremony of Profelytism among the *Jews*, which our Saviour borrowed from them." * Or, whether he borrowed it from the *Jews* or not, 'tis certain, that he appointed this Ceremony to be used in the receiving or admitting Profelytes to his Religion †. "Now the *Jews* called their Profelytes (f) *Recens Nati*, New-born Men; and, as such, counted them to have " quitted their Relation to their former Country, Kindred and Parents. Wherefore, we may well conceive, that by being *born of Water*, our Saviour meant, " becoming a Profelyte to him by Baptism; and otherwise, it would not have " been so strange a Thing, that *Nicodemus*, though a *Master of Israel*, should " not have understood" what he was speaking about. " 2. St. Paul expressly " calls *Baptism* *λειτουργία παλυντικῆς*, the *Washing*, or rather, the *Laver of Regeneration*; which what it signifies, but a Means whereby we are regenerated, or " whereby we become the Disciples of Christ, I cannot understand." According to the Apostle therefore, to be made a Disciple to Christ by Baptism, is to be *born of Water*. "Now where there is not only no Necessity to find a " Figure in Scripture-Phrases, but the proper Sense also contains a Truth very " (g) pertinent to the Subject spoken of; there, in all Reason, the proper " Sense (and consequently, here of the Word *Water*) ought to be followed. " And then, being *born of Water*, will signify our being admitted into the " Church as Disciples to Christ, and ingaged to be so for the future by Baptism." * In Truth, there is in every respect so exact a Resemblance between the Words of St. Paul, and those of our Saviour, that we cannot doubt, but that

(c) Exponit jam qualem Nativitatem intelligat; ne *Nicodemus* diutius Allegoricæ locutionis Ignorantiâ fallatur, *Grot.*

(d) Non loquitur de Baptismo, sed locutiones sunt alludentes ad Baptismum, *Grot.*

(e) That the Ancients universally understood this Text to speak of Baptism, any one will be convinced, who will read the learned Mr. *Wall's History of Infant-Baptism.*

(f) See Dr. *Hammond.* Not. in *John* iii. a See also Mr. *Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. Introd.* §. 6.

(g) How pertinent it was for our Saviour to tell *Nicodemus*, That a Man must become a Profelyte to him by Baptism, the Reader will perceive by-and-by, when he comes to our Author's Paraphrase upon this whole Discourse.

he had them in View, and that the one was intended as an Explanation of the other. Our Saviour says, That *except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot, &c.* St. Paul tells us, That we are *saved by the Laver of Regeneration, and Renewing of the Holy Ghost.* Where, as the *Renewing of the Holy Ghost* directly answers to the being *born of the Spirit*; so the *Laver of Regeneration* as directly answers to the being *born of Water.* †

§. VIII. By being *born of Water*, then, our Saviour most certainly meant, the being admitted as Profelytes to him by Baptism; And no less evident it is, that by being *born of the Spirit*, is to be understood, the being endued with that Love and Submission to Christ, which leads to Obedience to all his Commandments. * For, to be *born of the Spirit*, and to be *born of God*, are Phrases denoting one and the same Thing. Now the Effects of this latter are thus described by the Apostle †: 1 John v. 4, 5. “*Whatsoever is born of God over-* †
“*cometh the World; and this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.* P. 121;
“*Who is he that overcometh the World, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son* 122.
“*of God?* Here we have the full Character of one that is *born of God*. He is
“one who so believeth that Jesus is the Son of God, that his Faith prevails
“against all Worldly Temptations, and who, therefore, keeps the Command-
“ments of God.” And to the same Purpose, Chap. iii. Ver. 9. “*Whosoever*
“*is born of God, doth not commit Sin; for his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot*
“*sin, because he is born of God.* That is, Such is the State and Temper of his
“Mind; such is the Disposition of his Will and Affections, that he doth not
“sin; but his Life is agreeable to the Laws of God: *For his Seed remaineth in*
“*him; i. e. The Word of God, that Divine Seed, (as it is called Mat. xiii. 19.*
“*1 Pet. i. 23.) hath wrought its due and proper Effect upon his Soul, and is*
“become an effectual Principle of Obedience, and a Holy Life; which it al-
“ways will be, where it is received into an honest and a good Heart. There-
“fore, the Apostle adds, *And he cannot sin*; by which he means not that it is
“absolutely, but that it is morally impossible for him to sin; it being directly
“contrary to the Sense and Genius of his Soul, to the Frame and Temper of
“his Mind, so to do. It is not the Consideration of Worldly Interest; it is
“not the Want of Temptation and Opportunity, that keeps him at any time
“from offending God; so much as the Sense of his Duty, his Love of Vertue,
“and the Conformity of his Mind to the Laws of God. Such is the State of
“him who is *born of God*,” Now as every one that is *born of God*, SO believeth
in Jesus Christ, as to overcome the World and all its Temptations; So it is
also true, that every one THUS believing in Christ, and overcoming the World,
is *born of God*. For says the same Apostle, “*Whoever believeth that Jesus is the*
“*Christ, is born of God; i. e. Whoever believes with Such a Faith as implies Obe-*
“*dience, which is afterward expressly added in those Terms of keeping God's*
“*Commandments, and overcoming the World, 1 John v. 1, 2, 3. And again, Chap. ii.*
“*ver. 29. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth Righte-*
“*ousness is BORN OF HIM.*” From all this, I think, it is very evident, that
to be *born of God* or to be *born of the Spirit*, denotes Such a Faith in Jesus
Christ, as begets a Conformity of Mind to his Laws and Commandments.
* Which will appear yet farther, from the Words of St. Paul, Gal. vi. 15. In
Christ Jesus, says he, *neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision,*
but a NEW-CREATURE. Now thus he expresseth the same thing in different
Places. *In Jesus Christ neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision,*
but FAITH, WHICH WORKETH BY LOVE, Gal. v. 6. And; Circumcision is nothing,
and Uncircumcision is nothing, but the KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD,
1 Cor. vii. 19. Who sees not here that this New Creature, this Spiritual Birth,
is equivalent to that Faith which worketh by Love, to the keeping the Command-
ments of God? †

§. IX. You see now what is the true and full Import of being regenerate or born again; viz. That it implies, 1. A State of Profelytism to Christ by Baptism. And, 2. A State of Conformity to his Doctrine and Precepts, which is that which our Baptism engages us to. * Now, though this is the only compleat and adequate Notion of Regeneration, yet you cannot but have observed in going along, that to be Regenerate and those other Phrases equivalent to it, are frequently used in a more confined Sense, and have a Peculiar, or at least a more principal Relation, sometimes to the one of the above-mentioned Particulars, and sometimes to the other. In the Texts cited in the foregoing Paragraph, to be *born of God*, and to be *a New Creature*, do certainly denote that Submission or Subjection to the Will of Christ, which the Spirit works in the Heart of every true Disciple. For this is that, and that only, which both enables us to *overcome the World*, and makes it impossible for us (so long as it lasts) to be overcome by it. But when St. Paul speaks of the *Laver of Regeneration*, Tit. iii. 5. there the Word *Regeneration* peculiarly signifies, that State which we are admitted to by our Baptism; i. e. The State of Profelytism or Discipleship, which is here expressly distinguished from the ἀνανάιωσις Πνεύματος ἁγίου, the *Renewing of the Holy Ghost*, or that *inward Change of Mind* which leads us to Obedience. And thus I understand those Words of the same Apostle, 2 Cor. v. 17. *If any Man be in Christ, he is a New Creature.* The *New Creature*, I say, in this Place, denotes that Relative State we are in towards Christ, as his Disciples by Baptism; as will appear by considering the Context. For at the 14th Verse (speaking of himself as an Apostle) St. Paul says; *The Love of Christ, constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.* That is, The Love of Christ towards us, is a very strong and prevailing Motive with us, his Ministers, to do his Will. For thus we argue, That if Christ died for all, then were all dead; and that Christ died for all, that those who now live through him, should not henceforward live after their own Lusts and Desires, but in Obedience to the Commandments of him who died and rose again for them. Wherefore (adds he, verse 16.) *henceforth know we no Man after the Flesh; i. e. We regard or consider no Man according to the Flesh. We look upon all Worldly Relations to be as nothing, in Comparison to that near and intimate Relation we stand in towards Christ; Yea, though we have [or rather (b) had] known Christ after the Flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more; i. e. Though we were of the Number of those who personally knew Christ, and were his near Friends and Relations; yet should we consider him not according to that Relation, but according to that much higher Relation which he bears towards us as our King and Redeemer. And this he observes (verse 17.) is the Case not of the Ministers of Christ only, but of all who have given up themselves unto him by Baptism. For if any Man be in Christ (i. e. be a (i) Disciple of Christ) he is a New Creature; i. e. He is to be considered as one who has, in a manner, quitted his Relation to the Men and Things of this World; As one who is brought into a New State, under New Capacities and New Obligations: For* † *Old Things are [now] passed away; behold, all Things are become New.* †

P. 139, to
141.

§. X. FROM the whole, then, As we clearly perceive what is meant by being Regenerate, so we may, also, as clearly understand the Reasons why the Scripture useth this Metaphor; which, by way of Illustration, it may not be amiss briefly to set down. When we speak of being Regenerate or Born again, we refer to something which we now are, and which we were not before. Now, whoever considers the Difference that there is between the State of a Re-

(b) Ἐγνώκαμεν. Hic est Indicativus pro Subjunctivo, more Hebræo. Grot.

(i) To be in Christ, and to put on Christ, are Phrases of the same Import. Now the Apostle tells us, Gal. iii. 27. That as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.

generate and of an Unregenerate Man, either as a Regenerate *State* denotes our Relation to God, by being the Disciples of Jesus Christ; or as it signifies that inward Temper and Disposition, which is wrought in us by the Operations of the Spirit; whoever, I say, compares these two different States together, in either of these respects; will find so great a Change made by our removing from the one to the other, as may well justify the expressing it by the Similitude of the Natural Birth. For, 1. As to that Relative State which we stand in towards God, by being the Disciples of Jesus Christ, the Comparison is obvious; and has, in part, been already hinted at. * From the Natural Birth results a peculiar Relation between the Child and the Parent, which is the Foundation of several Obligations and Claims to and from each other reciprocally. The Child owes a Duty to its Parent, which it does not owe to any other of its Fellow-Creatures; and the Parent stands indebted to the Child in certain Benefits or Privileges, which cannot be challenged where this Relation doth not intervene. Now thus it is in our Spiritual Birth. By becoming the Disciples of Jesus Christ, we contract a more near and intimate Relation to God the Father, whose adopted Children we are, who hereby acquires a peculiar additional Right to our Services, and from whom, in virtue of our Obedience, we may claim Spiritual and Peculiar Favours, even *that Promise which he has promised us, ETERNAL LIFE, 1 John ii. 25. We were* (says the Apostle, *Eph. ii. 3.) by Nature the Children of Wrath, having no Hope, as being Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, verse 12. But now, in Christ Jesus, we, who before were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ, who hath reconciled us unto God, and through whom, we have an Access unto the Father. So that we are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God, verse 13, to 20. † 2dly, The Comparison will be no less visible, if we consider Regeneration as it denotes that inward Temper and Disposition of Mind, which is wrought in us by the Operations of the Spirit. For hereby “our Understandings are informed with the Knowledge of those Truths concerning God, Our Selves, and a Life to come, which we are most of all concerned to know; which is the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus.” * He who knoweth not Christ, knoweth nothing; *i. e.* he knoweth nothing to any good End and Purpose. And accordingly, this Ignorance is every where in Scripture represented as a State of *Blindness, Darkness, &c.* and the Gospel is called, *The Key of Knowledge, The Light of the World, The Truth, The Knowledge of God*; as if it were the only Truth, and the only Knowledge. He, therefore, who removes out of a State of Ignorance, or rather out of a State of Insensibility, into a State of Knowledge, may very well be represented as being born again. † “But that intrinsic Alteration which seems to afford the clearest Similitude, regards that Sense of Good and Evil which is proper to a true Christian. We know, that all living Creatures have such a Sense of Things hurtful and destructive to them, that thereby they are generally prompted to avoid them. ’Tis thus, I say, in the Natural Life, that we readily apprehend what is contrary to it; and, therefore, we do not run into the Fire, nor venture down Precipices, because these things are destructive to our Natures. And this is a very fit Emblem of the State of a true Christian. For, by reason of that Divine Temper of Soul which is wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, he hath such a like Sense of Good and Evil, with regard to his Mind and Conscience, as all living Creatures have with respect to their Natures. He therefore, who is a true Christian, is said to be born again, and to become a New Creature; because he hath a New Sense of things: He hath other Apprehensions of Sin, than Sensual and Worldly Men have; he looks not upon any Immorality as an harmless Thing; but apprehends all kinds of Wickedness to be (what they really are) pernicious and detestable. And this is the Reason (as I have already observed) of what St. John saith; *He that is born of God, sinneth not, and he cannot sin, because, he is born of God.*” For by this Sense of Good and Evil, “is produced a proportionable Change in Mens Wills*

“ and Affections, which, from being addicted to Sensuality and Worldliness;
 “ are come to be strongly inclined to Holiness and Vertue. This likewise pro-
 “ duceth a suitable Change in their Lives; which are now led not according
 “ to the Lusts of the Flesh, and the Examples of evil Men; but according to
 “ the Laws of God, and the Example of Christ. And thus they come to the
 “ true Use of all their Faculties; as an Infant, after it is born, falls into
 “ those Natural Motions, which before were obstructed by its Imprisonment
 “ in the Womb.”

P. 141,
142.

§. XI. “Lay all these Things together, and nothing will be more evident
 “ to you, than that so great a Change of our State is implied, in our being the
 “ true Disciples of Christ, that we are, as it were, other Men by being so,
 “ and so may fitly be said to be born again, when we become such Per-
 “ sons.” And this Change of our State being so much for the better, and
 making us “more excellent Persons than we were before,” this suggests to us
 “ another Reason for the Choice of this Metaphor; viz. The great Advantages
 “ we gain by it. We have, as it were, a new Being given us, when we truly
 “ believe in Jesus Christ, and conform our-selves to his Doctrine and Example :
 “ We are so much alter’d for the better, as if we had never lived ’till then;
 “ and we have infinitely more Reason to think of this Alteration in our State,
 “ than to remember the Day of our Birth with Joy and Gladness. Hence we find,
 “ that the Scriptures not only have represented the Advantages we gain by the
 “ Gospel of our Saviour, by Metaphors taken from Things most grateful to our
 “ natural Appetites, as Liberty, Life and Light; but withal have assured us,
 “ That the Good implied in those Things, does, in a more eminent manner,
 “ belong to the true Disciples of Jesus Christ. *If the Son shall make you free,*
 “ *then are you free* INDEED, *John* viii. 36. Now what this Freedom is, we are told
 “ *Verse* 32. *The TRUTH shall make you free*; and *Verse* 34. *He that committeth Sin,*
 “ *is the SERVANT of Sin.* So that this Freedom consisteth in the Knowledge
 “ of the Truth, and in Obedience to the Laws of God, which is that very
 “ State, that the Scripture elsewhere calls Light and Life, and being born a-
 “ gain, and created anew.”

P. 142,
143.

§. XII. UPON all these Accounts, then, it appears, that the Phrases, *To be
 born again*, and *To be a New Creature*, are very apt Metaphors whereby to ex-
 press our being the true Disciples of Jesus Christ. I need not observe to you,
 That “since it is by the Operations of the Spirit, that we become true Believers
 “ and good Men, our being then said to be born of God, or of the Spirit, does
 “ fitly express the Concurrence of that Divine Power, by which this Change
 “ is effected in us. As to those other Metaphors which the Scripture useth
 “ to express our being regenerate, the use and Meaning of them all, is easily
 “ discernable, though none of them seem to be so full and significant as these.”
Converting or turning; Taking away the Heart of Stone, and giving the Heart of
Flesh; Making a new Heart, and a new Spirit, do all of them signify “that
 “ Change which is wrought in the Dispositions of our Minds: *Purifying, Clean-*
 “ *sing and Purging*, express the Excellency of this Change, and how much our
 “ Natures are better’d by it.” But these Phrases, *To be born again*, *To be a new*
Creature (and those other which convey the same Idea, as *Quickening* and *Raising*
from the Dead) “contain all those Similitudes which are severally discernable
 “ in the rest, and express all the Advantages we gain by the Faith and Obedi-
 “ ence of the Gospel, whether inherent or relative. And as this, probably, is
 “ the Reason why they are more frequently used in Scripture than the rest are,
 “ so that, also, may be the Reason why it hath obtained amongst Christian
 “ Writers, to treat of the Conditions of Eternal Life more frequently under
 “ the Name of *Regeneration* and the *New Creature*, than any other Phrases
 “ whereby they are Metaphorically expressed. And, possibly, also, this com-
 “ mon Use of these Expressions, may have been an Occasion to some unwary
 “ Men,

Men, of imagining, that they are to be understood properly. But the Reader, I hope, will acknowledge, that I have given a plain and reasonable Account of the Use of these Metaphors, by shewing, where the Similitude lies between the proper and figurative significations of them; and by this any reasonable Person may also see, how far we may safely argue from them. "If any Man can go farther, and find out more Similitudes between the Metaphors, and that which is meant by them, I shall not be his Adversary, provided he keeps himself within the Bounds of Sense and Reason. But to argue (as some have done) from the proper Signification of any one, or all of these Metaphors, so as to conclude something Parallel in the State of a Believer to every thing which can properly be affirmed of them, (is, as has (k) elsewhere been shewn at large) to run upon such wild and absurd Consequences, as any wise Man would be ashamed to own, and any good Man would be afraid to fasten upon the Scriptures."

§. XIII. AND now, "though I have, as I conceive sufficiently proved, That P. 144, to be *born again*, is to become a true Disciple of Jesus Christ, yet, for farther¹⁴⁹ Confirmation, and because it may be of Use to the Ordinary Reader, I shall make it plain, that this Notion is agreeable to the Scope and Design of our Saviour's Discourse to *Nicodemus*. It is one of the best ways of interpreting any difficult Passage in Divine or Humane Authors, to observe the Design of that whole Discourse to which it belongs; and then to fix such a Meaning upon that Passage, as is apparently suitable to the Scope of the Author, if the Words will bear that Meaning. Now, that the Phrase of being *Regenerate* or *Born again*, will bear that Sense which I have assigned to it, I have shewn; and that it is the true Sense of it in other Places of Scripture, I have also proved: Wherefore, if I shew also, that this Sense of the Phrase is consonant to the plain Scope of our Saviour in this Discourse, nothing can be further desired to demonstrate, that it is indeed the true meaning of it here." Our Saviour, then, in this Discourse with *Nicodemus*, seems to have intended these Two Things, viz. "First, To shew, That Faith in, and Obedience to him, were the means by which God had appointed to bring Men to eternal Happiness. And, Secondly, to shew, The Unreasonableness of the *Jews*, who would not believe in him. The former we find *Verse 16. For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* That is, This is the way by which God hath determined to save Mankind, even by Faith in his only begotten Son: And this was so great a Demonstration of God's Love to Man, thus to give his only begotten Son, that no Man could hope to escape the Anger of God, who should refuse the Benefit of this Sacrifice. For the *Son of God* was to be *lifted up upon the Cross, as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness* (a rude savage Place, and so fit to be the Figure of that corrupted State of the World in which Christ came to dye for us) *that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, &c. verses 14, 15.* Wherefore, though indeed God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved; (verse 17.) yet he that believeth not, is condemned already; i. e. He is in a State to which Condemnation belongs, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God; i. e. For refusing so gracious an Opportunity of Salvation as was now offered, *Verse 18.* Secondly, Our Saviour shews the Unreasonableness of those Men that believe not; and that by noting, 1. The Evidence of that Truth which they disbelieved. And, 2. The true Cause of their Unbelief. The former he admonished *Nicodemus* of in these Words, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our Testimony, verse 11.*

(k) Discourse concerning the Operations of the Holy Spirit. Chap. 11. §. 3.

“ *i. e.* You believe not my Doctrine concerning the Way by which you must
 “ come to see the Kingdom of God, although it be evidently true. For this
 “ is that very Message which I bring you from God; This is that Counsel and
 “ Decree of God which I come from him to testify unto you; *viz.* That there
 “ is no other way but that. Now, this you acknowledge, that *I am a Teacher*
 “ *sent from God, because* (as you confess) *no Man can do those Miracles which I*
 “ *do, except God be with him,* verse 2. How strangely incredulous therefore are
 “ you, that you will not believe me delivering that Doctrine, which by these
 “ Testimonies of my coming from God, I confirm? 2. Christ assigneth the true
 “ Cause of this Unbelief. *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the*
 “ *World, and Men loved Darknes rather than Light, because their Deeds are evil,*
 “ verse 19. That is, The cause why Men believe not my Doctrine, is not because
 “ they want Reason and Argument to induce them to it; but because their
 “ Deeds are evil, because my Doctrine is so contrary to their Lusts and Vices, that
 “ they are not willing it should be true, and so do not attend to the Evidence of
 “ its Truth; and, therefore, greater shall be their Condemnation. *Every one that*
 “ *doth evil, hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds should be*
 “ *reproved. But he that doth the Truth; i. e.* He who is sincerely disposed to do
 “ whatever is the Will of God; *cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be mani-*
 “ *fest, that they are wrought in God; i. e.* He is not unwilling to have his Actions
 “ proved whether they be according to the Will of God or not. This is the
 “ Scope of our Saviour’s Discourse, and, therefore, it is plain, that supposing
 “ the true Disciple of Christ is to be understood by the Regenerate Man, the
 “ Beginning of our Saviour’s Discourse, concerning the Necessity of Rege-
 “ neration, is consonant to his evident Design, which was, to shew why we
 “ must be his Disciples, and how inexcusable we are if we be not. But that
 “ the Connexion of the Whole may be more clearly seen; I shall here sub-
 “ joyn a Paraphrase of this Discourse, so far as it concerns the Matter in hand,
 “ proceeding upon that Notion of Regeneration which has already been laid
 “ down.”

P. 149, to
157.

§. XIV. “It is probable (as *Grotius* observes) That after *Nicodemus* had acknow-
 “ ledged our Saviour to be sent from God, he asked him, What Qualifications
 “ a Man must have to see the Kingdom of God? To which Question our Savi-
 “ our’s Answer was,”

Verse, 3. *Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God; i. e.*
 “ No Man can enter into the Kingdom of God, except he become my Disci-
 “ ple, which you seem unwilling to be, because you come secretly to me for
 “ fear of the *Jews*. But, I tell you, it is not sufficient for you to acknowledge
 “ to Me, that I am a Teacher sent from God, but, withal, you must become
 “ one of my Disciples, and own your-self so to be, though you forfeit thereby
 “ the Honour you have in the *Jewish* State; for you must forsake All to fol-
 “ low me.” *Nicodemus* not understanding this to be our Saviour’s Meaning,

* † * or dissembling, perhaps, what he well enough understood, † replies as if it
 were required that a Man should be born again in the literal and proper Sense
 of the Words. For,

Verse 4. *Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a Man be born when he is old?*
Can he enter the Second Time into his Mother’s Womb, and be born?

Verse 5. *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a Man be born*
of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God; i. e. “It is not
 “ such a Birth that I mean. You must be born of *Water i. e.* You must by
 “ Baptism become a professed Disciple of mine. And you must be born of the
 “ *Spirit; i. e.* It is equally necessary, that by the Operations of the Holy Spirit
 “ (the Promise whereof is part of my Doctrine) you become obedient in
 “ Heart and Life to those Laws which I deliver.

Verse

Verse 6. *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit; i. e.* "That which is born in the literal Sense, as when an Infant is born of his Mother, is discernable to your Eyes; and the Change made thereby, is evident to your grosser Senses. It is not this Change which I mean; but a Spiritual Change; a Change of the Dispositions of Mens Hearts, and the Manner of their Lives; which Change, together with those Operations of the Spirit whereby it is produced, is not discernable the same way in which the Natural Birth is." (l)

Verse 7. *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

Verse 8. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; So is every one that is born of the Spirit; i. e.* "And let it not surprize you, that this Birth which I speak of, is not discernable to the Eye of Sense: For as the Wind, which bloweth hither and thither, is not discernable to the Eye; and though we see it not, yet we are assured there is such a thing, because we hear it; so the Operations of the Spirit, though you cannot feel them, yet you may be assured that they are, by those Effects or Alterations in you that are caused by them."

Verse 9. *Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these Things be?*

Verse 10. *Jesus answered and said unto him: Art thou a Master of Israel, and knowest not these Things? i. e.* "Art thou one of the great Council, a Learned Jew, and yet ignorant of these Matters? Do you not perceive that I speak to you of the Necessity of becoming my Disciple, in such Language, as any Man who is versed in your Customs, and the Writings of the Prophets, may easily understand? Is not being *born again*, that very Phrase whereby you express the making of a Profelyte? Is not *Washing*, one of the Ceremonies whereby a *Profelyte* is made among you? And therefore, when I tell you, That a Man must be born of Water, what should you think I mean, but that he must become my Disciple by Baptism? I have also told you, That he must be born of the Spirit too; and can you be ignorant, that those Prophecies which speak of the Days of the Messiah, do mention the Operations of the Holy Spirit upon the Hearts of Men, which shall then be liberally bestowed upon the Subjects of his Kingdom, to make them Good and Holy?"

Verse. 11. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our Witness; i. e.* "Now, I am that Messiah; but how credible soever that Testimony is which is given hereof, ye regard it not."

Verse 12. *If I have told you Earthly Things, and ye believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of Heavenly Things? i. e.* "If I have proved by these Miracles (which you acknowledge) that I am the Messiah, and yet you will not believe me, and become my Disciple; how much more unlikely is it, that you will believe me, when I tell you, that I, who am the Messiah, must be lifted up upon a Cross, and die for the Sins of the World (m)? And yet this is the Purpose of God for the Salvation of Mankind; which, how Strange

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(l) Some (not improbably) understand this Verse as assigning the Reason why it is necessary that a Man should be born of the Spirit, and paraphrase it more briefly thus; *That which is born of the Flesh, i. e. Human Nature unassisted by the Holy Spirit, is Flesh, i. e. Lives after the Motions of the Flesh. But that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, i. e. Lives according to the Motions or Directions of the Spirit.*

(m) I conceive, that by *Heavenly Things* here, may probably be meant, such revealed Doctrines, as were most contrary to the worldly and sensual Expectations of the Jews (who had long cherished in themselves the No-

"a thing soever it may appear to you, you have, yet, all the Reason in the World to believe upon my Testimony." For,

Verse 13. *No Man hath ascended up to Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man which is in Heaven; i. e.* "No Man hath (*n*) knowin the Secret Purpose of God concerning the way of saving Mankind by the Death of his Son. *No Man hath thus ascended into Heaven, but he that is come from Heaven, whom God hath sent to reveal this to you; even he who now speaketh to you, who am in Heaven, who know the Purposes and Intentions of my Father; concerning the way of Salvation.*"

§. XV. "I SHALL now leave the Reader to judge, whether the Paraphrase which I have here given of the former part of our Saviour's Discourse to *Nicodemus*, does not make the Connexion between all the Parts of it very clear; and also, whether our understanding the Regenerate Man to be a true Disciple of Christ (which is the Notion upon which this Paraphrase proceeds,) does not agree with the Scope of our Saviour's Discourse in this Place." In the mean while, I conclude, That, "this is THAT Regeneration, which is necessary to Adult Persons, as *Nicodemus* was." * I say, to Adult Persons; For it is to be noted, that we have all this while, been speaking of Regeneration, with a View only to such, and it is under this View that it is most commonly treated of in Scripture. The first Preachers of the Gospel were principally concerned with those who were to be brought over from Judaism, or Heathenism, to the Faith of the Gospel. When, therefore, they speak of Regeneration, they speak of it generally as it relates to such. But there is a Sense of Regeneration, in which it is common to all Baptized Persons, Infants as well as Adult; as well as a Sense in which it is *peculiar* to the Adult only. The Adult only can be said to be Regenerate, as that Word implies under it, a Change of Mind from Evil to Good, or a Conformity of the Will and Affections to the Commandments of Christ. (o) But the Word Regenerate (as has been

tion of a Messiah, who should fight their Battels, as their other Saviours and Deliverers had done) viz. That Christ should be delivered into the Hands of Men, and be crucified for the Sins of the World. And so, consequently, By *Earthly Things* may be understood, those Truths which were not so contrary to these Expectations; as, That Jesus was the Christ; and, That all Men were to be his Disciples; which the *Jews* would have been much more willing to be, had it not been for the Meanness of his outward Appearance, and his ignominious Death afterwards. Divers Reasons concur to support this Interpretation; as, 1. That after our Saviour had made way for it, by telling *Nicodemus* (verse 13.) that he only *ascended up into Heaven, i. e.* knew the secret Purposes of God concerning the way of Salvation, he immediately falls upon the Mention of that Death which he was to undergo for the Sins of the World: *And as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up*, verse 14. 2. The Cross of Christ was that which made the *Jews* most of all offended, that his Disciples should still pretend him to be the Christ. It was to the *Jews* a *Stumbling block*, and to the *Greeks Foolishness*; and, therefore, it is probable, that this was the Thing which the *Jews* would hardly believe; viz. That God would save Mankind by the Death of his Son. 3. When St. Peter rebuked our Saviour for telling his own Passion, he said unto him, *Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou savourest not the Things that be of God, or Heavenly Things; i. e.* The Wisdom of God's Way to save the World; but the Things that be of Man. Thou speakest according to the Imaginations of the *Jews*, who persuaded themselves, that the Kingdom of the Messiah will be of this World. After all; The Opinion of *Grotius* that the *ἐπίγεια* are the Similitudes of the Natural Birth, and the Wind, which our Saviour used; And the *ἐπουράνια*, Divine Things spoken without this Condescension by the use of Metaphors; And that of Dr. *Hammond*, who supposes the *ἐπίγεια* to be Things ordinary in the Jewish Law; want not their Probabilities. But the Notion which I have laid down, does, I think, better agree with the Context, *Clag.* p. 154, 155.

(n) I take this to be a more probable Interpretation of this difficult Place, than that which supposeth our Saviour to speak here of his local Ascension into Heaven afterwards. For, 1. The Words themselves seem not well able to bear the Notion of a future Ascension. 2. As *Grotius* hath observed, the Phrase of *Ascending into Heaven*, is, in other Places of Scripture, to be taken in the former Sense; viz. of gaining Knowledge from God. And, 3. If it is thus understood in this Place, then what our Saviour saith here, hath a clear Connexion with ver. 11. where he rebuketh the *Jews* for not believing his Revelations, taxing them with Unreasonableness for it, since he delivered nothing but what he had seen and known from God; and also with the precedent Verse, where, by the Heavenly Things, all agree those Doctrines are meant, which were to be known by Revelation, *Id.* p. 147.

(o) To be Regenerate, or Born again, (as that Phrase denotes the State or Condition of the Mind) seems, indeed, to have a peculiar Reference, not only to Adult Persons, but also to such Adult Persons, as have been brought over from Infidelity to Christianity. For Regeneration (as has before been observed) refers back to some

being REGENERATE.

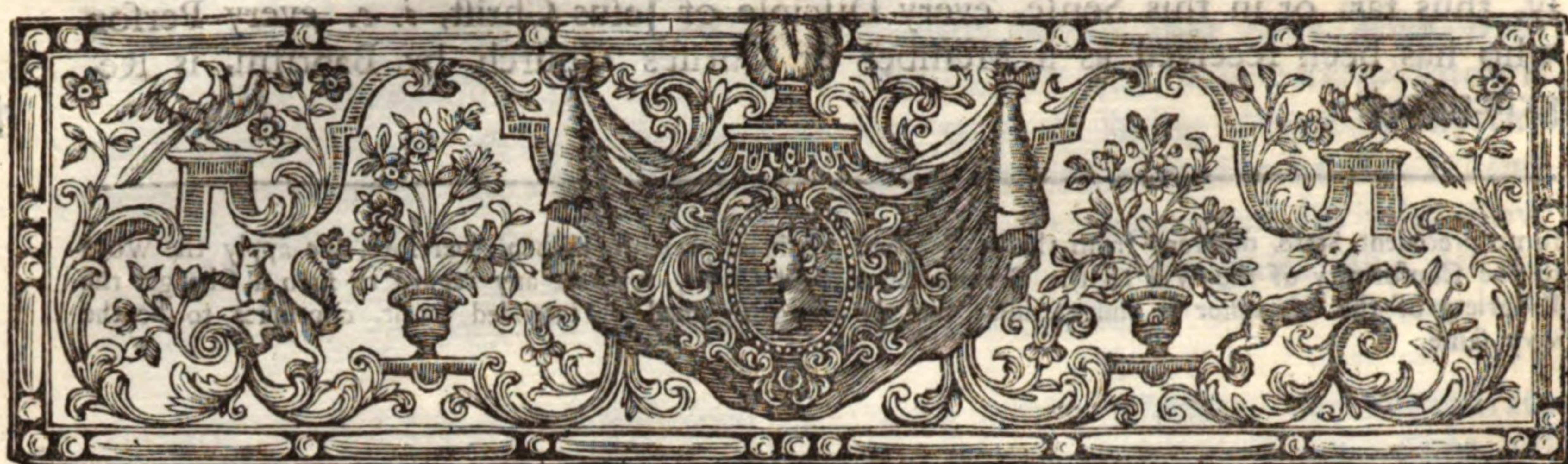
been shewn) is in Scripture sometimes used to denote that Relative State which a Man stands in towards God as the Disciple of Jesus Christ; and consequently, thus far, or in this Sense, every Disciple of Jesus Christ, *i. e.* every Person who has been received as a Member of Christ's Church by Baptism, is Regenerate. †

some precedent State, different from that which we are in at present. When, therefore, we apply the Word to the Conformity of the Will to the Commandments of Christ, without any regard to such a Change, the Propriety of the Metaphor is, indeed, lost; but the thing signified or intended by it, continues to be the very same.



D

DIS-



DISCOURSE I.

CONCERNING REGENERATION,

O R,

THE NEW BIRTH.

PART II.

*Wherein the Notions of some Modern Divines upon this Subject,
are examined and refuted.*

* §. I. * **H**AVING shewn you in the foregoing Part of this Discourse, what the Scripture means by being *Regenerate* or *Born anew*; I now proceed to examine those Notions concerning it, which have been entertained by some Modern Divines. And this I am the more willing to do, because I persuade my self, that when once the Reader comes to perceive what Extravagancies have been introduced upon this Subject; he will be the more readily disposed to acquiesce in that easy and familiar Idea of Regeneration, which has already been laid before him. Some have fancied, that the *New Creature* is (p) *a certain Principle of New Life infused by the Spirit of God, which Principle has a Being and Subsistence of its own in the Soul, and is super-induced to the essential Faculties of it*; that is, (for this they must mean, if they mean any thing) that the New Creature is not any Property or Quality belonging to the Soul, or the Soul endued with new Properties and Qualities; but that it is a real Substance distinct or different from the Soul. Now, it being evident, that there is nothing either in Reason or Scripture which has any Tendency to shew, that there is in Man any real Substance besides Soul and Body, this Notion appears, at first sight, to be a pure Dream of Enthusiasm; and, therefore, I shall have no farther regard to it, than as to what falls in in common with that other which I am going to mention, viz. That Regeneration consists in the having (q) *supernatural Habits* (of Holiness) *infused*

(p) Dr. Owen and his Followers See Dr. Claget. Par. 1. Chap. 3. Sect. 1.

(q) *Conversio Habitualis seu passiva fit per habituum supernaturalium infusionem a Spiritu Sancto* —
Illa REGENERATIO dicitur, quia se habet ad modum novæ Nativitatis quâ Homo reformatur ad Imaginem Creatoris sui. Turretin, Loc. 15. Quæst. 4. Sect. 13.

into the Soul by the Operations of the Spirit; which supposes (what, indeed, they seem also plainly enough to (r) assert) that the New Creature is not a real Substance, but a certain Affection or Disposition of the Soul, by which it becomes better than it was before. This Account, as it might be explained, I could very readily agree to; not, indeed, as setting forth the Whole of what the Scripture means by being born again. For, you must observe, that this goes no farther than to define what Regeneration is considered as an internal Effect of the Spirit's Operations; whereas (as I have shewn) the intire Scripture Notion of it, besides that inward Change which is wrought in us by the Spirit, includes also that Change in our Relative State to God, which is the Consequence of our being Baptized. But omitting this, I say, the Words will bear a very sound Sense; forasmuch as that Change of Mind, which is signified by the Word Regeneration, as it denotes an internal Effect, may well enough be expressed by the Infusion of supernatural Habits. But, as near as this Account seems to come to the Truth, it is, nevertheless, widely distant from it, both with respect to the Nature of the Thing defined, and also with regard to the Way or Manner according to which it is supposed to be effected. This I shall now make appear, by shewing, 1. What they teach concerning these supernatural Habits, in the receiving of which Regeneration is by them supposed to consist. 2. What they mean when they say, that these Habits are infused.

§. II. FIRST, then, I am to inquire, What these Divines teach concerning those supernatural Habits, in the receiving of which Regeneration is by them supposed to consist; whereby I do not propose to give you a precise Account of what they mean by these supernatural Habits: For this is absolutely impossible, unless it be possible to assign their Sense of a Word, who, by the manner in which they apply it, do plainly shew, that they do not understand what they would have themselves. That which a reasonable Man would understand by a Habit, I conceive is this: That it is a prevailing Bent or Inclination of the Soul, by which a Man (supposing him to have the free Use of his rational Faculties) is either always, or for the most part, determined to one particular way or manner of Acting. In this latter Case, *i. e.* when a Man is for the most part only determined to any one particular way or manner of Acting, the Habit is imperfect; but it is perfect, when this Determination is even and uninterrupted: In which Sense, therefore, a Man may be said to have attained to a Habit of Holiness, when he is under such a constant and regular Inclination to Vertue, that he will not, upon any Occasion, when he has Time to reflect and consider upon what he is about, deviate from the Rule or Measure of his Duty. And who will say, that a Christian thus disposed, is not in a Regenerate State? But this is not what these Divines would have. For those supernatural Habits, by the Infusion of which (as they suppose) a Man becomes Regenerate, are such Habits as a Man may be possessed of, and yet not shew forth the Fruit or Effect of them in his Life and Conversation; such Habits as are so far from leaving him under a constant and regular Inclination to Vertue, that they are consistent with a State of the most heinous and deliberate Wickedness; yea, (what is more) such as the most heinous and deliberate Wickedness cannot possibly extinguish (s). What sort of Habits these must be, it is, I say, not very easy to understand, nor, withal, is it material to inquire. That which I

(r) Novum Cor dicitur fieri in nobis non Physicè sed Ethicè; quia eadem substantia qua infecta fuit peccato debet restaurari per gratiam. *Id.* Loc. 9. *Quaest.* 11. Sect. 5.

(s) Actus quilibet peccaminosi non possunt subsistere cum actibus Justitiæ oppositis, *v. g.* Actus Adulterii cum Actu Castitatis; Actus Incredulitatis cum Actu Fidei; Actus Odii cum Actu Amoris; sed non possunt tamen Habitum ipsum excutere. Ita nihil obstat Fidem & Charitatem manere in Homine peccante. Sed — quoad Semen non quoad Fructum; quoad Habitum, sed languentem & imminutum, non quoad exercitium & operationes. *Id.* Loc. 15. *Quaest.* 16. Sect. 43.

would observe, as sufficient for my present Purpose, is this: That to say that Regeneration consists in the receiving of something, notwithstanding which a Man may be in a State of deliberate Wickedness, is to suppose, that a Man may be in a State of deliberate Wickedness, and yet all the while be Regenerate. And this is what these Divines do very plainly assert: For they tell us, That *(t) notwithstanding the Saints when they fall into heinous Sins, deserve to be shut out from the Kingdom of Heaven, yet, through the Mercy of God, they do not lose their Right to that Kingdom, nor do they cease to be in a State of REGENERATION. For the Grace of REGENERATION flows from the Spirit, who when he hath once implanted the quickning Seed in our Hearts, stamps upon it a Heavenly and Incorruptible Energy, &c.* The Case, you see, is evidently this, that according to them, the Grace of Regeneration is *(u)* Incorruptible; insomuch, that he who is once Regenerate, must always be Regenerate. Yet they grant, that he who is once Regenerate, may fall into such actual Transgressions, as render him unfit for the Kingdom of Heaven, and for which, if he were to dye in them, he would certainly be damned; from whence it follows, that to be Regenerate, and to be in a State of wilful Disobedience, are consistent Things. To qualify the Matter a little, they do indeed tell us, That the Sins which are committed by the Regenerate *(x)*, are committed only through Impotency and Infirmit; and there can be no doubt but that Sins of Infirmit (those I mean, which are truly and properly such) are consistent with a Regenerate State. But if you imagine, that they speak of Sins of Infirmit, as opposed to wilful, deliberate Sins, you will find yourself mistaken; for, besides that these are none of those Sins which will shut a Man out from the Kingdom of Heaven; they tell us plainly, that a Regenerate Man may be *(y)* under the Dominion of Sin, as to the Act, and as to some particular Sins which he INDULGES; that he may *(z)* concupiscentiis suis liberè turpiterque parere, live under a willing, filthy or shameful Subjection to his Fleshly Appetites; that he may follow them with servile or a slavish Indulgence against the Motions of Grace, and the Dictates of his own Conscience. Accordingly, there is not a Sin you can name (nor scarce any of the most aggravating Circumstances of it) which they do not allow to be consistent with a

(t) Licet sancti per gravia in quæ incidunt peccata mereantur exclusionem à regno cœlorum — fit tamen Dei Misericordiâ ut propterea nec jus ad regnum cœlorum tollatur — nec status REGENERATIONIS aboleatur effectivè. Quia — Gratia Regenerationis fluit à Spiritu, qui ut semen vivificum semel in cordibus nostris implantavit, ita illi imprimit vim cœlestem & incorruptibilem, eandemque perpetuò fovet & tuetur. *Id. Ibid. §. 41.* This Passage is borrowed from Act. Synod. Dord. Par. 2. p. 251. where we have these Words: Regeneriti quandoque suo vitio incidunt in atrocia peccata atque hinc — reatum damnabilem contrahunt; præsentem ad regnum cœlorum ingrediendum aptitudinem amittunt — Dei enim immota ordinatio postulat ut fidelis sic exorbitans per renovatum fidei & pœnitentiæ actum prius redeat in viam, quam ad viæ metam; i. e. ad regnum cœleste perducere possit — In illo [itaque] interstitio quod est inter contractum ex gravi peccato reatum, & fidei ac pœnitentiæ actum renovatum, stat talis peccator suo merito damnandus — [Interim vero] jus ad regnum cœlorum non tollitur; justificatio universalis non irrita redditur; status adoptionis manet immobilis — Semen Regenerationis unâ cum omnibus fundamentalibus donis, sine quibus hominis Regenerati status non consistit, facta tecta conservatur — Spiritus [enim] Sanctus, qui hoc semen cordibus renatorum infundit, eidem semini vim imprimit cœlestem eandemque perpetuo fovet & custodit.

(u) Orthodoxi — Habitum fidei semel electis indultum posse quidem interdum intendi vel remitti censent — pro ratione peccatorum intercurrentium; sed ita ut nunquam penitus & finaliter deleatur & amittatur, nec gratia Regenerationis semel homini collata penitus ab eo auferatur. *Id. Ib. §. 7.*

(x) Fideles non tam ex malitia & pleno voluntatis consensu peccant, quam ex Infirmitate & affectuum Impotentia. *Id. Ib. §. 34.*

(y) Non negamus fidelem posse subesse nonnunquam regno peccati partiali; i. e. Quoad actum, & quoad certa peccata quibus indulget; sed negamus subesse regno peccati universali quoad statum, ut absolutè in ejus potestatem veniat, & sine ullo renisu & reluctantia in illo dominetur. *Turretin. Ibid. §. 46.*

(z) Non deest quidem in nobis (sc. Regeneritis) per totum vitæ cursum motus & ductus Spiritus divini, ita tamen ut gratiæ deesse possumus, imo ut nimis sæpè desimus, ac subinde concupiscentiis nostris liberè turpiterque pareamus. Hinc illa *Gal. v. 16. Spiritu ambulate & desideria carnis non perficietis, & Eph. iv. 30. Nolite contristare Spiritum, &c.* Spiritum enim contristare dicuntur, qui ejus ductui resistunt, & servili quadam libertate concupiscentiis suis contra gratiæ motum & conscientiæ dictamen indulgent. *Act. Syn. Dor. Par. 2. p. 172.*

Regenerate

Regenerate State. Not the (a) Incontinency and Idolatry of *Solomon*; not the Adultery and Murder of *David*, which he committed, say they, (b) *pessimâ & deliberatâ Machinatione*, by a most wicked and deliberate Contrivance: In a Word, Not all those (c) *Works of the Flesh* which are mentioned *Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.* and of which the Apostle says, That *they which do such Things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* But what, then, do they mean, when they say, That the Regenerate sin only through Impotency and Infirmary? Why, only, That they do not sin (d) maliciously, on purpose, as it were, for sinning sake, with a high Hand, without Reluctancy before, or Remorse afterward. So that, according to them, let a Man be guilty of as much Wickedness as he pleases, yet, if he does not wage open War with Heaven, and brave the Almighty to his Face, *i. e.* If he be not altogether as bad as the Devil himself, he may, nevertheless, be said to be Regenerate.

§. III. THIS then, is the Point which I now fix upon; to wit, That in the Account of these Divines, wilful, deliberate Sin, is consistent with a State of Regeneration; a Proposition as contrary to the Word of God, as Light is to Darkness. For, First, It contradicts those Words of *St. John, Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God.* † “How should this be a Reason why a Man can-^{† Par. I. p. 123.} not sin, *viz.* That the Seed of God remains in him, that he is born of God, “if he may be guilty of notorious and wilful Sins, and yet that Seed remain, “and he be regenerate still?” * It is pretended, I know, that when the Apo-^{*} stle says of the Regenerate Man, that he cannot sin, his Meaning is not, that he cannot wilfully sin, but that he cannot habitually live or continue in Sin: And to this purpose, it is observed, that in the foregoing part of the Verse, (e) He doth not say, Whosoever is born of God, *doth not sin*, but whosoever is

(a) See *Mr. Turretin. Loc. xv. Quæst. 16. §. 29. ad finem.*

(b) *Act. Synod. Dor. Ibid. p. 175.*

(c) De Renatis asserendum est [quod]——cum labuntur potuerant gratiæ vi & subsidio, per voluntatem liberam——concupiscentiis suis restituisse & vitasse opera illa carnis manifesta quæ *Gal. v. 19.* recensentur, fornicationem, immunditiam, &c. *Ibid.*

(d) Qui opera carnis plenâ voluntate & datâ opera patrant——rectè dicuntur à fide penitus deficere. Sed hoc sensu fideles non possunt peccare; quia non tam ex malitiâ & pleno voluntatis consensu sine reluctantiâ peccant quam ex infirmitate, &c. Licet vero peccata illa non rarò fiant ex præviâ aliquâ deliberatione & contra conscientiam, quia tamen προαιρέτως illa non tam oritur ex habitu quam ex vehementi affectuum perturbatione in quibus est semper vel antecedens lucta, vel subsequens dolor, hinc patet non posse vocari peccata nequitiz & superbiz, quæ fiunt elatâ manu & gratiam omnem ex corde excutunt. *Turretin. Loc. sup. cit. §. 34.*

(e) Non dicit simpliciter non peccare natum ex Deo, *i. e.* verum fidelem, sed peccatum non facere, *i. e.* ita ut peccatum illi dominetur quo totus in diaboli potestatem regrediatur, eo modo quo peccant irregenerati cum studio & habitu peccandi, peccato regnante. Ut *justitiam facere* dicitur non qui quodlibet opus justitiæ facit, sed qui illi dat operam per continuum ejus exercitium; ut *medicinam facere* dicitur qui eam profitetur, & in ejus praxi versatur, *mercaturam facere, artem facere*, qui eam exercet. Thus *Mr. Turretin. (loc. cit. §. 23.)* whose Interpretation is somewhat countenanced by our Learned *Dr. Hammond* in his Note upon the Word Εἰσπράγματος (*Matt. v. 9.*) where he observes, that the Word ποιῆν, to do or work, in Sacred Dialect, doth oft signify the Habit or Bent of the Mind, with the consequent Actions. So, (says he) ἀμαρτάν ποιῆν, to commit or live indulgently in Sin; and ποιῆν δικαιοσύνην, to have a sincere Inclination or Resolution of Mind towards Righteousness, &c. That which the Doctor means, is, not that the Word ποιῆν inforces or specifies a Habit (for then it could signify nothing else;) but that it is often used where a Habit must necessarily be understood, which is very certain. But whereas he saith particularly, that ἀμαρτάν ποιῆν, in the Language of the Scripture, signifies, To live indulgently in Sin, I know not for what Reason he says it. He produces no Authority, nor, indeed, do I find that the Phrase is so much as once used in this Sense throughout the whole New Testament. The Phrase occurs but Seven Times; once *2 Cor. xi. 7.* Ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐποίησα; Have I committed an Offence? *i. e.* Have I done an ill Thing, in abasing myself, &c? Where it plainly denotes an Act, and not a Habit. Again *Jam. v. 15.* And the Prayer of Faith shall save the Sick——Καὶ ἀμαρτίας ἢ πεποιηκώς, And if he have committed Sins, they shall be forgiven him; where the Phrase is used indefinitely, and signifies precisely neither an Act nor a Habit; for it is just as if the Apostle had said, If he be a Sinner, he shall be forgiven. Once more *1 Pet. ii. 22.* Ὁς ἀμαρτίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν, Who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth; which Words being spoken of our Lord, signify, that he had committed no Act of Wickedness. The remaining Places are *John viii. 34.* & *John iii. 4, 8, 9.* which I shall consider above, and shew, that they carry no such Meaning. So that, upon the whole, I must look upon this as a

is born of God, doth not COMMIT Sin, *i. e.* He doth not habituate himself to Sin; he doth not make Sin his Trade or Employment; and he cannot sin, *i. e.* (say they) he cannot *thus* sin, *because he is born of God.* But that this is the full Sense of the Place, can never be argued merely from the Force of the Words themselves. For though I do not deny that the Word ποιῆν (upon which the main Stress of this Interpretation lies) is often used where a Habit must necessarily be understood; yet neither can it be denied, that it is as frequently, if not more frequently, used where single Acts are also spoken of. The Truth is, that this Word of it self denotes precisely neither an Act nor a Habit, but is indifferently applied to either; and, by Consequence, whenever a Habit is to be understood, this must appear not from the Word, but either from the Nature of the Thing spoken of, or from the Circumstances of the Place where the Word is used. To the first of these, *i. e.* to the Nature of the Thing, we cannot now appeal on either side; because, what this is, is the Point under Consideration; we must therefore be determined by the Circumstances of the Place: And what is there, in the Words either going before, or following after, which has any Tendency to shew, that the Apostle intended to exclude habitual and desperately hardened Sinners only, from a Regenerate State? Why here (so far as I can perceive) these Divines have little to say: But Dr. *Whitby* hath taken care to supply this Defect. He writes, indeed, in such a Manner, as 'tis scarce possible to know which side of the Question he is of: However, he has given it us in very plain Terms, "That he (f) cannot assent to that Exposition which saith, A Child of God (*i. e.* a Regenerate Man) cannot be guilty of any great or deliberate Crime;" and, accordingly, (with the Disciples of *Calvin*) he explains the Phrase ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, as signifying one who lives or goes on in a way of Sin. For this Interpretation, he has offered Three several Reasons; which I will now examine in their Order.

§. IV. AND, First, the Doctor argues "from the same Phrase used in St. John's Gospel, Chap. 8. Verse 34. Πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, *Whosoever commit- teth Sin, is the Servant of Sin.* Now (says he) to be the Servant of Sin, is plainly to continue and live in Sin." But had not the Doctor so plainly told us what it is that he was going to prove, I should verily have concluded, from his Way of Reasoning, that it had been the direct contrary. To be the Servant of Sin, he tells us (in the Words of St. Paul, Rom. vi.) "is to yield Obedience to it in the Lustings of it, (Verse 12.) for then Sin reigns in our mortal Bodies, and we are Slaves and Subjects to it; then doth it κυριεύειν, *Lord it over us*, and we are δοῦλοι εἰς ὑπακοήν, *Servants to yield Obedience to it* (Verses 14, 16.) Though the Conscience may boggle at it, our Reason may condemn it, our Will be somewhat averse to it; so that in obeying it, we do the Evil we would not: yet, if ἐμπλάκετες ἠτλώμεθα, we are so intangled as to be overcome by it, we are Servants to Corruption; for of what a Man is overcome, to that is

Mistake of the Learned Doctor; and that which seems to have led him (and I may add Mr. Turretin also) into it, is, that ποιῆν δικαιοσύνην, implies a Habit. But is not the Reason visible? To do Righteousness must needs imply a Habit, because Righteousness is a Habit; *i. e.* that which denominates a Man righteous, is not one single Act of Righteousness, but the constant Course and Tenor of his Life. But though one single Act of Righteousness is not enough to denominate a Man righteous; yet one single Act of Wickedness is enough to denominate him a Sinner. But the Doctor hath taken care to set this Matter right in his Note upon the Text of St. John, now under Consideration; where he observes, that ἁμαρτάνειν and ἁμαρτίαν ποιῆν, appear to be directly the same. And having put the Question, Whether these Phrases are to be interpreted only of an Habit of deliberate Sin, or belong to one single Act of it? he resolves it thus; That though he that lives impenitently in any Habit of known Sin, be most eminently said to sin, and to commit Sin, yet he that is guilty of any one deliberate Act, is here primarily meant by these Phrases. The Reasons he offers for this, are convincing, and shall be considered by and by. In the mean while it is evident, that in Dr. Hammond's Opinion, one single Act of wilful, deliberate Sin, is inconsistent with a Regenerate State. And, in this Point, he agrees with Grotius; and some other Learned Commentators.

(f) Annot. on 1 John iii. 8.

“ *he brought in Bondage, 2 Pet. ii. 19, 20. If the Law of our Members lead us*
 “ *Captive to the Law of Sin (Rom. vii. 23.) so that we yield our Members Instru-*
 “ *ments of Unrighteousness to Sin; we so commit Sin, as to be the Servants of Sin.*”
 In these Words it is directly asserted, That every one is *the Servant of Sin* (and, consequently, does *πορεύειν ἀμαρτίαν, commit Sin*) who yields Obedience to it in the Lustings of it; who is so intangled as to be overcome by it; who yields his Members the Instruments of Unrighteousness. And is not this true of every wilful, deliberate Sinner? Certainly it is! For he who to gratify the Lustings of the Flesh, consents to do what he knows he ought not to do, does thereby yield Obedience to the Lustings of the Flesh. He in whom the Motions of Sin do at any Time prevail above the Sense of Duty, is so intangled, as to be overcome by Sin; and he who at any time consents to act unrighteously, does hereby yield his Members the Instruments of Unrighteousness. These Characters, indeed, do most eminently belong to habitual Sinners, but they belong also to every wilful Sinner, though in a lower Degree. And what do we think was the Meaning of the Sacred Writers in those Passages, where we are exhorted, not to yield Obedience to Sin; not to be overcome by it, and the like? Was it merely to guard against evil Habits, and not also against every wilful Transgression? Or who would imagine, that even the Doctor himself was here describing the State of habitual Sinners, when he speaks of them as those *whose Consciences boggle at Sin; whose Reason condemns them, and who, by obeying Sin, do the Evil that they would not?* The Doctor, therefore, so far as I can perceive, is arguing all this while against his own Interpretation; which he does (if it be possible) yet more plainly in the following Words. For thus he proceeds;
 “ He that is born of God, CANNOT thus sin; because, by that New Birth, he
 “ is made free from (the Service of) Sin, John viii. 36. and become a Servant
 “ to Righteousness, Rom. vi. 18. He hath that Seed within him which alienates
 “ his Mind and Affections from Sin, and that Spirit which causes him to mor-
 “ tify the Deeds of the Flesh, Rom. viii. 13. to die to Sin, and to live unto God,
 “ Rom. vi. 10.” It would have been impossible for the Doctor to have said any thing more full to the Purpose, had he intended to shew, that all wilful Sin is inconsistent with a regenerate State. For with what Face of Truth can it be said, That he who wilfully and deliberately transgresses the Law of God, is made free from the Service of Sin, and become a Servant to Righteousness; that his Mind and Affections are alienated from Sin; that he is dead unto Sin, and alive unto God? He who obeys Sin (as every wilful Transgressor doth) is the Servant of Sin: For (as the Apostle speaks in this very Chapter, ver. 16.) *Know ye not that to whom ye yield your selves Servants to obey, his Servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of Sin unto Death, or of Obedience unto Righteousness?* Such a one, by consenting to Sin, shews, that his Mind and Affections are not alienated from Sin; at least, not so far alienated, as that he may be said to be dead to Sin, and alive unto God. For (to use the Words of the Apostle once more upon this Occasion) *How shall we, that are dead to Sin, live any longer therein* (Verse 2.)? Or as it is ver. 1. *How shall we continue in Sin?* The Meaning of which is not (as the Doctor seems to fancy) that he who is dead to Sin, cannot habitually sin, but that he must forthwith cease to sin, as a Man who is naturally dead, ceases from all natural Actions. But the Doctor’s next Reason is still more extraordinary; For, Secondly, he argues “ from those
 “ Words, *Neither can sin;*” upon which he is pleased to observe, That “ this
 “ doth not imply that a good (or regenerate) Man cannot be overtaken with
 “ a Fault,” *i. e.* (for thus he explains himself) so as that “ he shall not be
 “ obnoxious to some Infirmities and Wandrings out of the Way” (which is
 “ nothing to the Purpose;) “ But the true Import of that Phrase (says he) is
 “ this; That he hath such an inward Frame of Heart, such a Disposition of
 “ Spirit, as renders Sin exceeding odious and hateful to him: So that he can-
 “ not entertain the Thoughts of doing it, or a Temptation to commit it, with-
 “ out the utmost Detestation, and the greatest Horror, and so (pray mind

“ it) can very rarely, and ONLY through Surprize, or WANT of due
 “ DELIBERATION, or through such violent Temptations as PREVENT
 “ or HINDER his CONSIDERATION, be obnoxious to Sin.” ———
 I will proceed no farther; such broad Contradictions are not every Day to be
 met with. The Doctor’s Business was to prove, that ποιῆν ἁμαρτίαν, *to commit*
Sin, signifies only to live or go on in a Way or Course of Sin, in Consequence
 of his Principle, That a Man may be guilty of a deliberate Crime, and yet be
 Regenerate; and he proves it by such a Reason, as shews, even in his own O-
 pinion, that if a regenerate Man does sin, it can only be FOR WANT of Deli-
 beration! If there were any such thing as taking the Doctor at his Word, now
 is the Time that I would do it; and then we should have no farther Con-
 troversy upon this Point: For it would be agreed between us, that a re-
 generate Man, whilst such, cannot be guilty of a deliberate Crime. But the
 next Reason sets us quite asunder again. For, Thirdly and Lastly, he argues
 “ from the Phrase, *He that committeth Sin* (ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν) *is of the*
 “ *Devil.*” Upon which the Doctor observes, with the same Pertinency as be-
 fore, That “ ’tis not he who committeth one or more Sins of Infirmary,”
 that is of the Devil; and adds, “ Nor he who committeth one great,” *i. e.* (for
 so the Opposition requires that it should be understood) one deliberate “ Sin,
 “ through the Power of a strong Temptation, of which he bitterly repents,
 “ and from which he returns to his Obedience.” But why doth the Doctor
 confound Things which ought to be distinguished? Would he say, that a wil-
 ful Sinner is not a Child of the Devil, after he has repented and returned to
 his Obedience? ’Tis granted; for then he ceases to be a wilful Sinner. But
 if he means, that a wilful Sinner is not a Child of the Devil, even whilst he
 continues to be such, *i. e.* before he has repented him of his Sin (which he
 seems to me to mean, and which he must mean if he would speak to the
 Point) this is what I shall demand of him to prove: And he proves it from
 hence, that “ *David* and *St. Peter* did thus” (*i. e.* committed great Sins through
 the Power of a strong Temptation) “ and yet (saith he) were not then the
 “ *Children of the Devil!*” Not then the Children of the Devil! What,
 not whilst they were in a State of wilful Disobedience! What, not before they
 had repented them of their Sins! Where did the Doctor learn this? Why, no-
 where that I can see; nor doth he believe one Word of what he says himself:
 For he tells us in the very same Breath, that They are the Children of the
 Devil, “ who comply with the Lusts of Satan, and will do them.” Either
 then it must be shewn, that wilful Sinners do not comply with the Lusts of
 Satan, which is palpably absurd; or else the Doctor here bears Witness against
 himself, that *David* and *St. Peter*, whom he supposes (whether rightly, or not
 rightly, it matters not to inquire) to have been both wilful Sinners, were,
 whilst such, or before they repented, Children of the Devil. For ought I can
 perceive, therefore, the Doctor, even in Virtue of his own Reasoning, must be
 obliged to admit that as the true Sense of this Passage, which he hath rejected
 as a false one, *viz.* That he that is born of God sinneth not, *quamdiu renatus*
est, whilst he is born of God, because he ceaseth to be a Child of God when
 he sins. The Examples of *David* and *St. Peter*, whose *Faith* (says he) *failed*
not under that great Miscarriage, will not help him. For he knows very well,
 that *Faith without Works*, *i. e.* Obedience, is not enough to make a Man a Child
 of God. If therefore a Man fails in his Obedience, *i. e.* wilfully transgresses
 the Law of God; if he complies with the Lusts of the Devil, and will do them;
 we have the Doctor’s own Word for it, that be he *David*, or be he *Peter*, he
 is at that Time not a Child of God, but a Child of the Devil. But the Doctor
 farther endeavours to confute himself by “ the Words of the Apostle, 1 Joh. ii.
 “ 1. *Little Children, if we sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ*
 “ *the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins.*” From hence he would
 infer, that a Man may sin, *i. e.* (for this is the Point, and thus it follows in
 the very next Words) be guilty of a great and deliberate Crime, and yet at
 the

the same Time be a Child of God. For, saith he, Christ "is only the Advocate for the Sons of God." And does then the Doctor believe in good earnest, that Jesus Christ is an Advocate for wilful and deliberate Sinners, whilst they are such? If not, what becomes of his Argument? And if he does, *I call Heaven and Earth to record against him*; the Word of God, and the Reason of Man; which both of them assure us, that he neither is, nor can be, an Advocate for any but the truly Penitent, *i. e.* those who through the Assistance of the Divine Grace, have recovered themselves from a State of Sin, to a State of Obedience. I shall conclude with one Passage more, in which the Doctor hath decided the whole Point against himself, as plainly as one could wish, "That Man (says he) who, after some Contest in his Soul, yields to the Commission of Sin, is more strongly inclined to Sin, than to the avoiding it, and so, IS NOT RENEWED." Here now is a very plain Confession: 1. That no Man is renewed (*i. e.* regenerate) who is more strongly inclined to sin, than to the avoiding it. 2. That this is the Case of every one who yields to the Commission of Sin after some Contest in his Soul, *i. e.* after Deliberation; which, if it does not amount to a plain Confession that ALL deliberate Sins are inconsistent with a regenerate State, I must for Ever despair of knowing what does.

§. V. It appears, I suppose, by this Time, that the Doctor hath sufficiently puzzled the Cause which he undertook to clear. Let us now see what Light the Apostle himself affords us towards understanding his own Meaning; and for this, we need go no farther back, than to the Beginning of the Chapter, of which these Words are a part. At the 1st Verse, he puts us in mind of the great Love of God the Father towards us, in the Redemption which he hath wrought for us by his Son Jesus Christ; *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God. Beloved, now are we the Sons of God.* In the following Words, he shews us, the great Benefit and Advantage of this Sonship, which is the blessed Vision and Enjoyment of God; *It doth not appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, (verse 2.)* After this, the Apostle observes the Effect which this Consideration will have upon the Lives and Conversations of those who are disposed earnestly and seriously to lay it to Heart. *And every Man that hath this Hope, who lives under a constant Expectation of this Enjoyment of God, purifieth himself; and that, so far as the Condition and Circumstances of Human Nature will permit, even as he is pure, (verse 3.)* Then he shews us wherein this Purity doth consist, *viz.* in an universal Obedience to the Commandments of God, or in the abstaining from all manner of Sin. *For whosoever committeth Sin, transgresseth the Law; for Sin is the Transgression of the Law, (verse 4.)* which whosoever is guilty of, he contradicts the End and Design of our Saviour's Coming: For, *ye know, that he was manifested, or appeared in the Flesh, to take away our Sins, i. e. (as it is verse 8.) to destroy the Works of the Devil, that in us there might be no Sin, even as in him is no Sin, (verse 5.)* Whosoever, therefore, *abideth in him, i. e.* whosoever is a true Disciple of Jesus Christ, and, as such, maketh his Law the Rule of his Conversation, *sinneth not; whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him, i. e. not to any Effect or good Purpose, (verse 6.)* All which, that it might leave the more strong and lasting Impression upon our Minds, is inculcated with some Earnestness, *vers. 7. Little Children, let no Man deceive you: He that doth Righteousness, he, and he only, is righteous.* It is not Faith, or any thing else, that can make us Righteous before God, or justify the Character of our being his Children, without Obedience to his Commandments. For, as it follows, *vers. 8, 9. He that committeth Sin, is not born of God, is not a Child of God, but a Child of the Devil.* Thus stands the Context: From the Whole of which, it appears, That the Apostle was all the while exhorting Christians to abstain from Sin, to the Intent that hereby they might approve them-

themselves the Children of God, and intitle themselves to the Hope of Everlasting Life. The Point now is, of what Sin the Apostle speaks; whether of habitual Wickedness only, or of actual and deliberate Transgressions also: And this is so easy a Question, that 'tis impossible, one would think, that there should be any Mistakes about it. It is of Actual Sin that he speaks, *verse 4*: where he saith, That *Sin is the Transgression of the Law*. It is of Actual Sin that he speaks also, *verse 5*. where he saith, That Christ was *manifested to take away our Sins*: For, as Dr. Hammond notes, "He came to take away our Acts, as well as our Habits, and there was no Act as well as no Habit of Sin in him." From whence he very rightly infers, That "in all that follows, *vers. 6, 8, 9, &c.* "one Act of Sin is contrary to *abiding in Christ, i. e.* to adhering to him; to *seeing and knowing him, i. e.* to obeying him. One Act is *of or from the Devil*; one Act is contrary to that *Seed, that Purity, that Principle of Filiation* that is in him that is *born of God*, and not only an Habit of it." There is not the least Sign that the Apostle any where changes the Sense of his Terms; and how absurd is it to suppose, that in dissuading Men from every Actual Sin, he should have recourse to an Argument which concludes only against Habitual? But, I must farther and particularly observe, that the Apostle says not only negatively, that he that is *born of God, doth not commit Sin*; but also positively, that he *doth Righteousness*. For thus, *verse 10. In this the Children of God are manifested, and the Children of the Devil; i. e.* This is that by which the Children of God are distinguished from the Children of the Devil; *Whoever doth not Righteousness, is not of God*. And on the other Hand (*Chap. 2. Verse 29.*) *Every one that doth Righteousness is born of him*. To *do Righteousness*, therefore, (*ποιεῖν δικαιοσύνην*) in the Apostle's Account, is the essential, specific Character of a regenerate Man. And what is it to *do Righteousness*? Why those shall answer for me who say that *ποιεῖν ἀμαρτίαν* signifies to sin habitually; that it is to do good, or to keep the Commandments of God habitually. But if none are Regenerate but those who are habitually good, how can it be true that none are Unregenerate but those who are habitually evil? Is there no Medium between these two Extremes? Or, is a Man as soon as he removes from a Habit of Vice, immediately settled in a Habit of Vertue? The Mind of the Apostle is certainly clear to those who are willing to understand him. According to him, none are Regenerate, but those who are under such a constant Sense of their Duty, such lively and vigorous Inclinations to Holiness, as that they cannot at any Time knowingly and wittingly offend. These only are those who can be said to *do Righteousness*, even those who have gained an intire Victory over the World and all its Temptations: For this is another Character which the Apostle hath given us of the Regenerate Man, *Chap. v. 4. Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the World*. What does he mean by this? Is it no more than that the Regenerate Man is got above the Predominancy of evil Habits? Surely, not! For these Words are given as a Reason for what went before, *viz.* That the Commandments of God are not grievous. *This, says he, is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the World*: As if he had said, "It is no hard or difficult Thing for those who are born of God, to keep his Commandments, because such have overcome the World." Now, by keeping God's Commandments, the Apostle undoubtedly meant, the abstaining from all actual and wilful Violations of God's Commandments; and what Propriety is there, in order to shew, that it is no hard Matter for a Man to do this, to alledge only, that he is under such a Temper or Disposition of Mind, as will not permit him to break God's Laws habitually? He that ventures upon any one Act of wilful Sin, does thereby shew, that the Commandments of God are grievous; so that if, nevertheless, he may be said to have overcome the World, it must be said likewise, That although a Man has overcome the World, yet the keeping of God's Commandments may be grievous, which is contrary to the Apostle's Supposition,

and

and takes away the Force of the whole Argument. The Inference, therefore, to make it just, must be thus; That it is no hard Matter for one that is born of God to keep God's Commandments, because such a one hath got the Mastery over that which alone can at any Time prevail upon a Man to do a wicked Thing. He hath such a sincere Love and Affection towards God; such Hopes of his Mercy; such Fears of his Vengeance; and, in Consequence hereof, such an inward Conformity to the Divine Will; as will incite him more strongly to Obedience, than either the Pleasures or the Troubles of this World can to the contrary. To such a one as this, the Commandments of God will not indeed be grievous; *i. e.* comparatively, and with respect to Sin, which under any Circumstances, will to him be much more grievous. Of such a one it may truly be said, That he cannot Sin; *i. e.* He cannot with Knowledge and Deliberation consent to any one Act of Sin; for he who doth thus, doth thereby shew, that his inward Disposition to Obedience, is less powerful, than the Temptations of this World, *i. e.* That he hath not overcome the World, but is overcome by it.

§. VI. I WILL now leave it to any Reasonable Man to determine, whether that Doctrine which supposeth wilful Sin to be consistent with a Regenerate State, doth not contradict the Account which St. *John* has given us of the New Birth; and will add, Secondly, That it also contradicts all those Places of Scripture, which speak of Regeneration as that which qualifies us for the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Saviour tells us, that *except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*; which implies, That to be *born again*, is not only necessary, but sufficient also, to qualify us for the Kingdom of God. St. *Paul* tells us, That we are *saved by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*; *i. e.* (as has been already shewn) by Baptism, and that inward Change from Evil to Good, which is wrought in us by the Operations of the Holy Ghost; and St. *John* speaks of the *being born of God*, or the *Children of God*, as the Foundation of the Hope that we shall hereafter be admitted to the Vision of God. How then can Regeneration be consistent with wilful, deliberate Sin, which so long as it remains unrepented of, every one knows, unqualifies us for the Kingdom of Heaven? Or how do they not contradict the Scriptures, who tell us, That a Man may be unfit for the Kingdom of Heaven, and yet be Regenerate? Now this is what these Divines do expressly teach. For, they tell us, That when the Regenerate fall into heinous or deliberate Sins, they do (g) *præsentem ad Regnum Cælorum ingrediendum aptitudinem amittere*; *i. e.* That for the present, or until they have done away these Sins by Repentance, they are unfit to be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven; that they do *mereri exclusionem*, deserve to be excluded, or shut out from it; that they stand *suo merito damnandi*, which, in plain English, is, That they are in a damnable State. But, what! Could our Saviour undertake to shew us the Way to Heaven, and yet prescribe such a Method, as might leave those who should pursue it, in a damnable State? Does a Man deserve to be excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven who has that by which, as St. *Paul* says, he is saved? Or, can he be unfit for the Kingdom of Heaven, who, as the Words of St. *John* do manifestly imply, hath a just Foundation whereupon to build the Hope of Eternal Life? I know they tell us, That notwithstanding the Regenerate, on the Account of those heinous Sins which they are supposed to be under, are unfit for the Kingdom of Heaven, and in a damnable State, yet they have, all this while, a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven. But that a Man's having a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven, should be consistent with his being in a damnable State, is to me absolutely unintelligible. To say, that a Man is in a damnable State, is to say, that in Justice, or according to Right, he may and ought to be condemned; and to say,

(g) See the Citation above [1]

that a Man has a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven, is to say, that in Justice, or according to Right, he ought to be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven; which Propositions being directly contradictory, cannot therefore be truly affirmed of the same Person, at the same Time. To have a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven, and to be fit for the Kingdom of Heaven, are equivalent Expressions: For, we have a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven no otherwise than in Virtue of the Promise of God in Jesus Christ: This Right, therefore, must necessarily suppose a Performance of the Conditions upon which the Promise is made. Now, the Performance of these Conditions, is that which qualifies or fits us for the Kingdom of Heaven; and, consequently, he who is not qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven, has no Right to the Kingdom of Heaven. This (if they would attend to it) they would find to be true, even upon their own Principles. For though they tell us, that a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven is not founded upon the (b) Actions, *i. e.* the Qualifications of Men, but upon God's free Adoption, *i. e.* upon his Absolute Decree; yet, they do not suppose this Absolute Decree to be of such a Sort, as that God hath determined thereby to save this or that particular Person, whether penitent or impenitent (upon which Principle, 'tis plain, that as the Regenerate, whom they suppose universally to be God's adopted Children, would not lose their Right to the Kingdom of Heaven by wilful Transgression; so neither would they be in a damnable State.) But their Notion is this, That God, who hath decreed them absolutely to Salvation, hath also absolutely decreed them to that (i) Obedience, without which he hath determined not to bestow Salvation. Supposing then, I say, that our Right to the Kingdom of Heaven was founded upon such a Decree as this, yet since, according to this Decree, Salvation is not to be had without Obedience, 'tis evident, that so long as a Man remains in a State of Disobedience, he can have no Right to Salvation in Virtue of this Decree. It may be said, indeed, that God has determined, that he shall have a Right; but it cannot truly be said, that he actually has it, unless you will say, that a Man may have a Right to a Thing which he cannot claim according to the Nature and Constitution of the Decree, upon which this Right is supposed to be founded. If those Divines, therefore, would be consistent with themselves, they should say plainly, That a Man may be Regenerate or born of God, and yet have no Right to the Kingdom of Heaven: But this is too shocking a Proposition, and therefore, this Method has been thought of to soften it. But to little Purpose, as, I hope, I have now shewn you: And give me leave to add, That if there were any Ground for this subtle Distinction, it would not, in the least, help them. For the Scriptures either say nothing, or they speak of Regeneration as that which fits or qualifies us for Eternal Life. Suppose our Saviour had said in the Affirmative, *If a Man be born again, he shall enter into the Kingdom of God*; would not any Mortal have understood him as setting down those Qualifications which God requires on our Parts, in order to our Admittance into the Kingdom of Heaven? And does not his Negative way of speaking, in common Construction, amount to the same thing? What think you of St. Paul, when he says, that *according to his Mercy, he saved us by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*? Doth he not here very plainly set forth the Mercy of God as the Ground of our Salvation; and Regeneration, both External and Internal, as Qualifications by which we become fit and proper Objects of that Mercy? — But, why do I urge? The Thing

(b) Jus nostrum ad regnum Cœleste non in actionibus nostris, sed in gratuita Adoptione — Situm est. *Act. Syn. Dord. Par. 2. p. 253.*

(i) Dei immota ordinatio postulat ut fidelis exorbitans per renovatum fidei ac pœnitentiæ actum prius redeat in viam quam ad regnum cœleste perducere possit — Impossibile est ut *David* electus pereat; Impossibile est ut simul *David* adulter & homicida, si mors illum oppresserit impœnitentem, non pereat. Sed hunc nodum Divina Providentia & Misericordia facillè solvit curando, ut nemo electorum ex eo statu moriatur, in quo à vitâ æternâ juxta aliquam Divinæ Voluntatis ordinationem excluderetur. *Ibid. p. 252.*

is plain enough of it self; and if Men be not over-run with Prejudices, they will need only common Sense to enable them to see it.

§. VII. By this Time, I think, it pretty plainly appears, that the Notion which these Divines have framed to themselves concerning Regeneration, is widely distant from that which the Scripture teaches. For, whereas they tell us, That a Man may be guilty of the most heinous and deliberate Sins, and yet, at the same Time, be Regenerate; the Scripture describes the Regenerate Man, as one who cannot sin, *i. e.* who cannot, with Knowledge and Deliberation, consent to do a wicked Thing, having overcome the World; *i. e.* all those Temptations by which Men are led to commit Sin. And this Point must be carried so far as to say, That unless a Man has gained such an Ascendant over his Passions, as to be willing, when God calls him to it, to part with every thing for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, he is yet unregenerate. For, says our Lord, *If any Man come unto me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple; i. e.* Unless he be ready to forego every Blessing or Advantage of this World, when the Use or Enjoyment of it comes to stand in Competition with Obedience to my Word, he cannot, &c. *For he that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that loveth Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his Cross, and followeth me, cannot be my Disciple; i. e.* He cannot be my true Disciple: He cannot be one whom I shall approve and reward, *Luke xiv. 26, 27. Mat. x. 37, 38.* Such Perfection doth the State of Regeneration imply! And so far is it from being true to say, that to do wickedly, and to be Regenerate, are consistent Things! Let it only be observed, (and it deserves well to be taken notice of) That as this Denial of Our-selves, this Resignation of Life, and the most valuable Treasures of it, is not a Duty ordinarily incumbent upon Christians, but (as has been said) upon those only whom God shall call to it; so to be absolutely, and in every respect, qualified for it, is not ordinarily necessary to a Regenerate State. A Man ought, indeed, to be always in as good a Preparation as he can, because he knows not how soon he may be called to Sufferings; and by how much the nearer he is come to such a compleat Victory over the World, by so much the more perfect, without doubt, the Regenerate State must be. But we must not make it essential to a Regenerate State, to be at all Times absolutely prepared against the greatest Sufferings; for, besides that upon this Foot it would be a very difficult Thing to assure Our-selves that we are in a Regenerate State, it being so hard to know how such Sufferings will affect us before we feel them; besides this, I say 'tis evident, that the Gospel requires no such Qualification. The Promise of Eternal Life is made to those who love God, and keep his Commandments, which must certainly be extended to all who serve him faithfully in the Station they are in: For, to suppose that God hath made our Salvation to depend not upon what Men actually do under those Circumstances in which he has placed them, but upon something which they might or would do under those Circumstances in which he hath not placed them, is to make him a much more hard and severe Master than any of Our-selves. If a Man behaves himself as a good Civil Subject, and it were known that he might be tempted to transgress by the Offer of a Sum of Money; though we should upon this Account value him so much the less, yet, I conceive, we should not think it right, so long as he doth his Duty, that he should be hanged, or even debarred from the common Privileges of Civil Society. And thus much we may say of God, with much greater Reason, as he is infinitely more just and righteous in his Dealings, than Man, that he will, indeed, look upon us so much the less perfect, and reward us the less, by how much the less able we are to indure Afflictions for his sake; but he will exclude none from Heaven, much less consign them to Punishment, merely because they are not qualified to indure those Afflictions which he doth not think fit to lay upon

upon them. This will be farther evident, if it be considered, that our Ability to resist Temptations, is not merely from Our-selves, but from the Grace of God assisting and supporting us under them; and that God doth not give to all the same Abilities, nor yet to the same Man at different Times; but proportions those Temptations, which, in the Course of his Providence, he suffers Men to fall under, to their different Abilities. This seems to be hinted at in those Words of the Apostle, *1 Cor. x. 13. God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, &c.* But it is incontestably clear from that Method which our Saviour made use of in training up his Disciples, which was always to accommodate himself to their Weaknesses; and lest by being overburdened, they should fall away, to take great Care not to lay any more upon them, than that Degree or Measure of Proficiency which they had made under him, inabled them to bear; as you may observe from *Mark iv. 33. John xvi. 12. Matt. ix. 17.* Now, if we are therefore unqualified to resist Temptations, because we want that Strength which God alone is able to give, and which he doth not think fit to give, we cannot so long be obliged to be qualified; but we must be acceptable to God (though not equally) under every Degree of Perfection, *i. e.* when we make a due Use of that Measure of Grace which he affords us, by doing that which is proper to the Station we are in. I will beg leave to say farther, That we shall entertain no unworthy Apprehensions of God, nor indeed any but what the Scriptures themselves do seem to warrant, if we suppose, that when Men are eminently good and vertuous, but labour under some notable natural Infirmary, it pleases him, out of his mere Mercy and Goodness, to secure them from the Assaults of those Temptations, under which (though it may not be impossible for them to resist them, yet) he foresees they will be very apt finally to miscarry; and, I think, verily, that a Christian would not pray amiss, nor, perhaps, contrary to the Intention of our Saviour, who should offer up that Petition in the Lord's Prayer, *Lead us not into Temptation, &c.* in this Sense, that God would both enable him by his Grace to resist those Temptations, which it shall please him to lay upon him, and also prevent him, by his good Providence, from falling under those by which, through the Prevalency of some peculiar Infirmary in himself, he might be disposed to make an ill Use of his Grace, *i. e.* to be intangled and overcome. Farther, what better Sense can you put upon these Words of our Lord to St. Peter, Simon, Simon, *behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat; but I have prayed for thee, &c.* than by supposing them to imply, that Christ by his Prayers had obtained, that the Devil might not have Liberty to try his full Strength upon that truly good, but, as yet, weak and unstable Man, lest hereby, his Faith might have failed, as his Courage and Constancy did very quickly after? Now, if God doth thus provide against the Infirmities of his Servants, it must be supposed, that those on the Behalf of whom he thus provides, notwithstanding they are not in a Condition to indure the greatest Sufferings, are, so long as they do their Duties in the Station they are in, in a State of Acceptance. For, to say, that they are not, is to destroy the very Notion of that Mercy and Goodness which the Case supposes, and to make God to act a very unaccountable Part, in protecting those by his good Providence here, for a Reason, upon which he will reject them hereafter. To conclude, we are strictly charged and commanded in the Gospel, not to lay Stumbling-blocks, *i. e.* the Occasions of, or the Temptations to, Sin in another's Way; and that for the Sake of those weak Men, who by such Occasions, may be led aside from their Duty, and fall into Condemnation. A very plain Argument, that a Man may be in a State of Acceptance, although he be so disposed, as that under certain Circumstances, he would certainly transgress. For, surely, there can be little Reason why I should be commanded not to be unto my weak Brother, an Occasion of falling, if his very Weakness were his Crime, *i. e.* if he were under God's Displeasure, even before an Occasion of Falling be ministered unto him. Here then I rest the whole Matter: Let every Man consider
how

how he behaves himself in that Station of Life which God has assigned him. If he finds himself unable to bear up against those Temptations which such a Station does naturally and ordinarily expose him to, the Case is but too plain, that he is yet Unregenerate. But if, on the other hand, the Sense of his Duty to God, and the Motives of a Life to come, do operate so strongly upon his Mind, that he is become superior to every sinful Lust and Affection; if he is assured of this by repeated Tryals; and, more especially, if he observes that he now proceeds easily and chearfully in his Duty, amidst all those Assaults by which he was formerly wont to be overcome, let him give God the Praise, and not doubt but that the Spirit hath wrought that good Work in him, which both for the present renders him acceptable to his Heavenly Father, and which, if he perseveres in unto the End, shall finally be rewarded. I say, if he perseveres: For this is the only Point now to be taken care of, even that he *loseth not the Things whereunto he hath attained*; a Thing which is, alas! more than possible. For that which has already been said, only shews, that so long as a Man is in a Regenerate State, *i. e.* so long as he is so disposed as to love God, and Truth, and Heaven, above all Things, he cannot wilfully sin; it has not the least Tendency to shew, that he who is once Regenerate, must always be Regenerate. This is the Doctrine of those whose Principles I am now considering; but which utterly contradicts both Reason and Revelation. If, indeed, Regeneration were what they would have it to be, it might, for ought I can tell, be an indelible Quality, because I know not what Quality that is which they call Regeneration. But if it be such a vertuous Disposition of Mind as I have been describing, Reason tells us plainly enough, that for lack of Care and Watchfulness over a Man's self, it is capable of being lost; and I will add (by the Grace of God) capable also of being regained. As for what is offered upon this Head from Holy Scripture, I need not now consider it, having so largely pursued this Point upon another Occasion. (k)

§. VIII. WHEREFORE, to proceed. The Difference between the Scripture Notion of Regeneration, and that which is taught by these Divines, will still be more visible, if it be considered, That as on the one Hand they tell us that a Man may be in a State of wilful, deliberate Sin, and yet be regenerate: so, on the other Hand, they suppose, that he may live conformably to all the Laws of the Gospel, and yet be unregenerate. The Words of Dr. Owen are very full to this Purpose; and, therefore, I shall here set them down. (l) REGENERATION, says he, *doth not consist in a Moral Reformation of Life and Conversation: For, let us suppose such a Reformation to be extended to ALL known Instances. Suppose a Man to be changed from Sensuality unto Temperance; from Rapine to Righteousness; from Pride, and the Dominion of irregular Passions, unto Humility and Moderation, with ALL Instances of the like Nature which we can imagine, or are prescribed in the Rules of the strictest Moralists: Suppose this Change to be laboured, exact, and accurate, and so of great Use in the World. Suppose also, that a Man hath been persuaded and brought to it through the preaching of the Gospel; so escaping the Pollutions of the World through Lust, even by the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, or the Directions of his Doctrine delivered in the Gospel; yet, I say, ALL THIS added unto Baptism, accompanied with a Profession of Faith and Repentance, IS NOT REGENERATION, nor do they comprise it in them.* These are strange Words! And I cite them not because they are Dr. Owen's (to whom I determined, when I first undertook this Subject, not to pay any particular Regard) but because, so far as I can perceive, they ex-

(k) Operations of the Spirit, Chap. 15.

(l) See Dr. Clager, Part I. Pag. 127, 128.

press the Sense of the whole Party. Those of our English Divines, who sat at the Synod of *Dort*, seem plainly to have been of the (m) same Opinion; for they say likewise of the Unregenerate, That they may *escape the Pollution that is in the World, by the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour*; that they may demean themselves so, as that *in Charity they ought to be looked upon as justified and sanctified*. Farther, that this Change of Manners may be hearty and sincere; insomuch, that the true Reason why they are not finally justified, is not because they pretend to those good Qualities which they have not, but because they do not persevere in those that they have. What better Description than this can you have of a truly honest and vertuous Christian? Or what greater Opposition can you conceive, than that which this Account of the Unregenerate bears to those Words of the Apostle before-mentioned, *Whosoever doth Righteousness, is born of God*? He who keeps all the Commandments of God, *i. e.* he who in every Instance conforms himself to the Gospel Rule, not upon a Principle of Policy and Worldly Interest, but from a Sense of his Duty, and upon the Motives of a Life to come, to the Belief and Expectancy whereof he is won over by the Power of God's Word; such a One, I say, may, undoubtedly, in the Apostle's Sense, be said to *do Righteousness*. Now, all this, it seems, an unregenerate Man may do, and, by Consequence, the Contradictory of the aforesaid Proposition, must necessarily be true; *Whosoever doth Righteousness, is NOT Regenerate or Born of God*. Nor is this Account less contradictory to the Words of our Saviour, than to those of the Apostle. For, let us suppose a Man to be in such a State as is now described, and then I demand What lacketh he yet to qualify him for the Kingdom of Heaven? Without tarrying for an Answer, I shall venture to maintain, that he lacketh nothing; and they themselves confess as much: For they say, that he lacketh nothing, but Perseverance. But he who lacketh nothing but Perseverance, doth indeed lack nothing: For Perseverance, in the very Notion of it, implies not an Addition of any new Vertues to the old, but only the Preservation of, or Continuance in, those to which a Man has already attained; and he that is in such a State as that, if he shall persevere therein, he will obtain Salvation, is undoubtedly at present, and so long as he remains in that State, qualified for Salvation. To say, therefore, of such a Man, that he is unregenerate, is to say, in Effect, that a Man may be qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven, and yet be unregenerate; which directly contradicts our Saviour's Assertion, *Except a Man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. So wide of the Truth is this Notion of Regeneration, in what View soever you consider it! After all, I must not dissemble, that this Account which they give us of the Unregenerate, is, at other Times, very frequently contradicted by themselves. And no marvel; For what but Contradiction can be the Effect of Contradiction? Or how is it possible, that those should talk consistently, who take upon themselves to defend Doctrines which are inconsistent. The Case, in short, is this: Their Notion is, that the Elect (who, in their Account, are alone the Regenerate or Children of God) cannot finally fail, or die in Impenitency. Yet, they do not deny, but that it is possible, that those, who *know the Way of Righteousness, and do from the Heart obey the Form of sound Doctrine*, may through the Subtlety of the Devil, and the Want of Care and Watchfulness over themselves, afterwards *depart from the Holy Commandment delivered unto them*. This, I say, they do not deny; because, if they should deny it, they would have Reason, Scripture, and the sad Experience of the World against them. What then shall we say of such? Are they, even whilst they are in the Way of Righteousness, in a regenerate State also? No, by no Means; for then it would be plain, that a regenerate Man may possibly fail or die in Impenitency. But how can those not be in a Regenerate State, who sincerely and heartily keep God's Commandments, and whom the Scripture every where

(m) Vide Act. Synod. *Dord.* Part II. p. 246, to 250.

speaks of as the Children of God, and Heirs of Everlasting Happiness? Why, here lies the Difficulty, which is indeed insuperable; and, therefore, when they come to speak home to the Matter, and to shew how the falling away of such is consistent with their Doctrine of the Saints Indefectibility, then these unregenerate Men (as they call them) are set forth in another Light; then they are represented as (*n*) mere Hypocrites, as those whose (*o*) Affections are enslaved to this World; as hardened, impenitent, and the like. In a Word, they speak as if it were impossible that there should ever have been any such thing as real Vertue or Holiness, unless it be in those whose Holiness is made compleat and perfect, by a final Perseverance. Thus they go to Work; affirming and denying the same thing, as it were, in the same Breath; which is a plain Argument to me, that they themselves do feel the Weight of their own Burden: And how hard a thing it is to stand it out against the Evidence of Scripture, that he, who by the Power of God's Word, and the Assistance of his Grace, is led to pay a Religious Observance to all his Commandments, may yet be Unregenerate; which, in Effect, is to say, That though a Man has all those good Dispositions which the Gospel requires, yet, he may all the while be never the nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven.

§. IX. I HAVE now shewn you the Falshood of this Notion concerning Regeneration, with respect to the Nature of the Thing defined, or with respect to those Habits wherein Regeneration is supposed to consist. I come now to consider, what the same Divines do teach concerning the Way or Manner by which these Habits are conveyed into the Soul, or by which a Man becomes Regenerate. Now, as to this, they say, 1. That Regeneration is an infused Habit, *i. e.* it is put into the Soul all at once. And, 2. That this is done by the immediate Operation of the Holy Ghost, without any Concurrence or Co-operation on the Part of Man. 'Tis true, they tell us, That there are several Things (*p*) necessary to be done on our Part, in order to our being Regenerate; and that God does not (ordinarily, at least) effect the New-Birth in us all at once, by violent Snatches and Enthusiastic Motions, but gradually, and in a manner agreeable to our Natures. But if the Reader supposes them hereby to mean, that Regeneration it self is a gradual Work, or that Man is in any Degree or Measure the efficient Cause of his own Regeneration, he will find himself mistaken. For that which they ascribe to Man, as the efficient Cause, and that which they suppose, that God, by way of Co-operation, effects in Man, not all at once, but by Degrees, is only some-thing by which the Soul may be disposed or fitted for the Reception of supernatural Habits; *i. e.* it is not the New-Birth it self, but something which is necessary by way of Preparation for it. That a Man may be Regenerated, say they, it is necessary that he attends upon the Public Worship of God; that he hears his Word, and the like. It is necessary likewise, that he receives the

(*n*) Certum quidem est etiam non Regenitos quædam honesta & laude digna in rebus civilibus præstare. — quæ tamen ex Fide & bonâ Conscientiâ non procedunt. *Theol. Palatin. in Act. Syn. Dor. Par. II. p. 177.* See also Mr. Turretin, Loc. 10. *Quæst. 5. §. 2. Loc. 15. Quæst. 15. §. 9. Loc. 16. Quæst. 4. §. 28.*

(*o*) *Theol. Britan. Act. Syn. Dor. Par. II. p. 249.*

(*p*) Non quæritur an ullæ necessariæ sint dispositiones in hominē quibus ad conversionem præparetur. Fate-mur enim in Spirituali generatione non minùs ac in naturali per multas præcedaneas operationes ad Spirituali-nativitatem perveniri; & Deum (qui opus istud non per raptus violentos vel motus enthusiasticos vult peragere, sed modo nostræ naturæ convenienti, & qui non uno momento, sed successivè & gradatim illud promovet) uti variis dispositionibus quibus homo paulatim præparetur ad gratiam salutarem recipiendam; saltē in vocatione ordinariâ. Ita ut varii sunt actus antecedanei & quasi gradus ad rem antequam ad statum Regenerationis perdu-catur, vel externi qui ab homine fieri possunt, quales sunt templum adire, verbum audire, & similia; vel interni qui a gratiâ etiam in cordibus nondum conversorum excitantur, quales sunt verbi propositi receptio, notitia vo-luntatis Divinæ, sensus aliquis peccati, timor pœnæ, & desiderium aliquale liberationis. Sed quæritur an in ipso conversionis momento, & quoad gradus rei homo habeat aliquid ex se quo cooperetur gratiæ efficaci. — Nos negamus cum Orthodoxis, qui nullam causam efficientem propriè sic dictam agnoscunt quàm Deum ipsum regenerantem. *Turretin. Loc. 15. Quæst. 5. §. 4.*

Word of God, knows his Will, has some Sense of his own sinful Estate, some Fear of Punishment, and some Desire of Deliverance; which Dispositions they ascribe to the Operations of the Holy Ghost. But all this is not Regeneration; no, nor any Part of it: For, according to them, when all this is done, a Man is every whit as much unregenerated as he was before. The Matter is plainly this: Those Dispositions which they call Preparatory, are not supposed to be the Beginning; and the subsequent ones, the Growth and Perfection of a Regenerate State; for this were to make Regeneration a progressive Work, carried on by various Acts, both on the Part of Man, and on the Part of God. Whereas, according to them, Regeneration is one simple undivided Act of God alone; an Act, which being once supposed, the Man, who was wholly unregenerate before, (q) may immediately and presently be affirmed to be born of God. So that the New-Birth in this Account, differs as much from those Preparatory Dispositions, as the Form of an Image differs from those Accidents or Qualities in Wax or Clay, by Vertue whereof those Bodies become susceptible of such a Modification; and a Man contributes to his own Regeneration, just about as much as he who cuts and prepares Wood for the making of a Vessel, does to the filling it with Water afterwards. But these Mistakes will easily be set right by the help of what has been already said. For if a Regenerate State consists in the being endued with all Christian Graces, and implies an universal and sincere Obedience to all the Commandments of Christ, as has been proved, it will then be plain, "That † Regeneration doth, in part, consist of those Graces
 " which are preparatory thereunto;" because these Graces are a Part of that universal Obedience. By being Regenerate, a Man acquires many good Dispositions, which he had not whilst he was in a State of Preparation only; but he loseth none of those which he had: The Regenerate State implies both the old and the new; and, consequently, differs "from mere Preparedness, no otherwise than as the Whole differs from a Part; and the prepared Mind becomes Regenerate, not by a total Change of it's present State, but by an Addition of something that was wanting before. Farther, since Grace and Vertue increase by Exercise; and since the several Vertues of a Christian do mutually assist each other; it may be said, That those good Qualifications which the Regenerate Man was endued with in his prepared State, are now improved to greater Perfection; Meekness and Humility, v.g. are more deeply rooted in his Temper, and more conspicuous in his Behaviour: In his Concern for Heaven, he is more zealous; as having had some Experience of the Heavenly Life, and being more sensible of the Vanity of Worldly Things. In his Prayers, he is more devout and frequent; in good Meditations, more attentive and permanent; in holy Resolutions, more satisfied and inflexible; and in his whole Conversation, more vigilant and circumspect." There are, indeed, some good Properties belonging to a State of Preparation, which, instead of rising higher, do fall lower, when Men come to be thoroughly Regenerate. For Instance; "Sorrow for Sin, although it be necessary to a good Beginning, and, in some Degree, inseparable from the best State of a good Christian in this Life; yet, it cannot be increased, but will assuredly be abated by a thorough Conversion from Sin unto God. In like manner, that Fear of Hell, as it is distinguished from the Hope of Heaven, must, in Reason, be less troublesome to a true Convert, than it was at first: For, as his Hopes grow bigger, his Fears must of Necessity be less." * But the Reason of this, is, because the Goodness of these Affections or Properties, does gradually lessen, as Men come nearer and nearer to Perfection in the Regenerate State. To be sorry for Sin, and afraid of Hell, whilst we are yet under the Guilt of Sin, and, consequently, in the State of those *to whom Vengeance belongeth*, are, doubt-

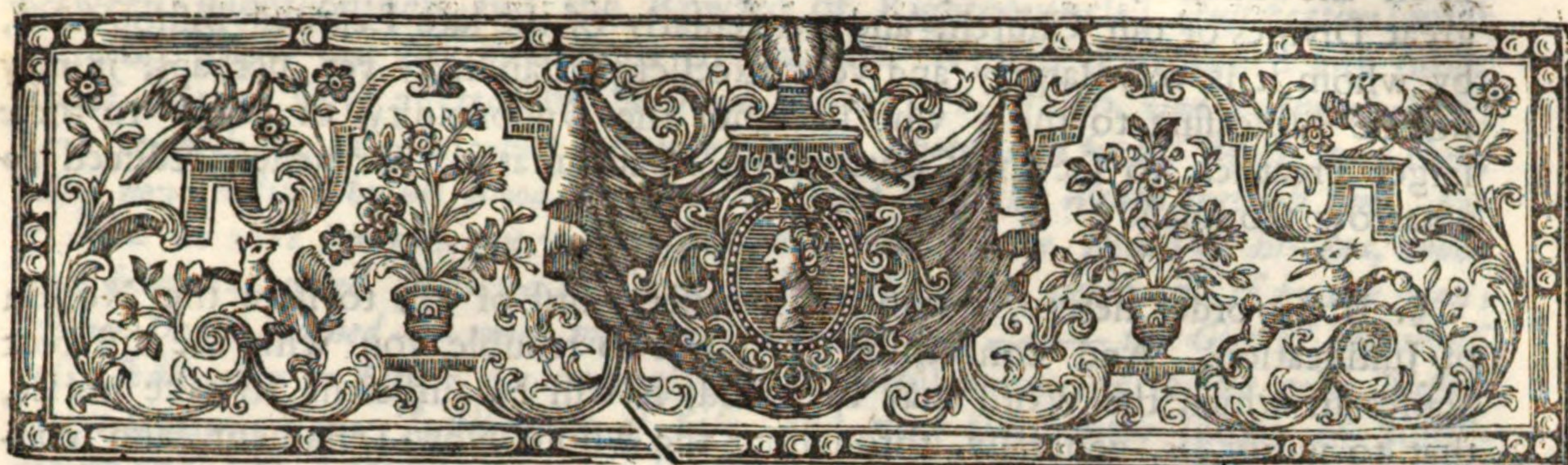
† Clag.
 Part II.
 P. 90.

(q) Per Regenerationem intelligimus non quemvis actum Spiritus Sancti, ad Regenerationem prævium vel tendentem; sed illum actum quo posito statim rectè affirmetur, Hic homo jam natus est ex Deo. Theol. Britan. Act Syn. Dor, Par. II. p. 169.

less, good Properties, as they are very prevailing Motives to such a Change of Life and Manners, as may intitle us to Mercy and Forgiveness. But when that Change is once wrought; though even then we have reason to be angry with Our-selves, that we have ever offended God; yet, the Sense of it cannot lie so heavy upon us, or be so afflicting to us, because we have not the same Reasons to be afflicted. Our Consciences may, and certainly will, whenever we reflect upon our past Sins, reproach us as ungrateful; but our Fears cannot, or at least, ought not, to terrify us as lost and miserable. We ought, indeed, to be always under such an Awe of the Divine Vengeance, as will make us careful not to offend. But, to be afraid of Hell in any other Sense, whilst we are in a reconciled State, *i. e.* in that State which God hath promised Forgiveness, betrays either great Ignorance of our own Condition, or a Diffidence and Distrust of that Justice and Goodness, by which we have been led to Repentance. † The Case, in a few Words, then, is this; That such preparatory Graces as are good in themselves, and equally useful in all Conditions, will be improved in those who are truly Regenerate; whereas those which are good, accidentally only, or with respect to the different Circumstances of our State, must either rise or fall, grow higher or lower, as our Condition towards God is worse or better, more dangerous or more safe. “But, admitting this Exception, we may, by what has been said, discern what is the Difference between the Prepared and the Regenerate, *viz.* That the latter is endued with all those Christian Graces which the other wants, which is the principal Difference; and he is also arrived to greater Perfection in those which are common to both.” * So that now, I think, we may safely conclude against these Divines, That Regeneration is neither an instantaneous Work; nor is it effected by the Spirit, as the sole efficient Cause. For that those Graces or Dispositions which they call Preparatory, are gradually wrought, is certain, and they allow. They grant also, what is no less certain, that in Order to the Attainment of these Dispositions, MAN must concur by the Use of external Means, *i. e.* by the Use of his own Endeavours. Man, therefore, is plainly, in part, the efficient Cause of these Preparatory Graces. Now if these Preparatory Graces do differ from Regeneration no otherwise, than as a Part differs from the Whole, he must, of Consequence, be, in part, the efficient Cause of Regeneration; and Regeneration will be a progressive Work, carried on by various Acts and Operations both of Man, and of the Spirit which dwelleth in him. The very first Dawnings of Grace in our Hearts; the most early and languid Motions towards Godliness, must be considered as the Beginnings of this New-Birth; as the Embryo of the Spiritual Man, who will receive Growth and Increase by every new Improvement, till, at last, he becomes perfectly formed, by a total Subduction of the Flesh, and an utter Abolition of the whole Body of Sin.

§. X. THIS Idea of *Regeneration* is so natural and easy, that 'tis wonderful to me how any one should ever dream of infused Habits; especially, since there is so little Countenance for it to be met with in Holy Scriptures. For the most that I can find alledged, in order to support this Conceit, is, the Use of certain Metaphorical Expressions, by which Regeneration (which, indeed, it self, is a Metaphorical Expression) is described; and between which, and the Thing described, they fondly imagine there must be a proper Resemblance in every Particular. Thus, because Creation in a literal Sense is an instantaneous Production; therefore, they conclude, that Regeneration is so too, because Regeneration is called the New Creature. But why would not my Argument be as good, if I should say, that because the Natural Birth is not effected all at once, but is gradual and progressive; therefore, Regeneration, or the Spiritual Birth, is progressive also? Much after the same manner it is, that they go about to prove that Man is not in any Degree the efficient Cause of his own Regeneration. — But these Arguments have already been considered in my former

Treatise, concerning the Operations of the Holy Spirit, to which referring those who desire farther Satisfaction, I conclude with observing to my Reader, That the unkindly Aspect which these odd and whimsical Notions about Regeneration have upon true Christian Piety, is the great Reason why I have bestowed thus much Pains in refuting them. If Regeneration be an infused Habit, of such a Sort, as that wicked Men may have it, and good Men may be without it; 'tis plain, that we have then no Rule by which we can, with any manner of Certainty, satisfy Our-selves whether we be in a Regenerate State, or not. For how shall we know whether we have these infused Habits? Not from the Scriptures; for these no where speak of any infused Habits, nor have they left us any other Rule whereby to discern the inward Operations of the Holy Ghost, than the State and Condition of our own Hearts, with respect to Vertue and Piety. To describe Regeneration, therefore, in such a Manner, as that a vertuous and a holy Life shall be no sure Sign that a Man has it, nor Wickedness that he has it not, what is it but to take Men off from the Word of God, as the Touch-stone by which to try and examine the State and Condition of their Souls, and to send them to the Suggestions of the Devil, or the Delusions of their own foolish or wicked Imaginations? 'Tis, certainly, too great an Encouragement to Vice, to be told, that though a Man be in a State of wilful, deliberate Sin, he may yet be a Child of God; and a no less Discouragement to Vertue, to be taught, that though he has all those good Dispositions, which the Gospel recommends, he may be unregenerate; more especially, when it is said withal, that a Man becomes Regenerate, as it were, by a sudden and violent Snatch, which is supposed to be the Effect of a Power with which he himself does not in the least co-operate, and which is absolutely irresistible. What Encouragement can He have to labour to *mortify the Deeds of the Body*, who believes, that his Sins, how great soever they be, cannot destroy his Sonship, nor cancel his Right to the Kingdom of Heaven? Who, if he can be so absurd as to separate his having a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven, from his being qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven, is yet so consistent with himself, as to be persuaded, that that inward Principle which his Wickedness cannot extinguish, and which is inseparable from a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven, will, at some Time or other, qualify him for the Kingdom of Heaven, effectually, and in spite of all Opposition? When they have made the most of it they can, it will, I fear, comparatively, be but very small? But, assuredly, those Principles take away all Comfort from the Good Man, who may not be disposed to presume more confidently in Favour of himself, than the Sense of his own Integrity and Uprightness will carry him. Such a one as this, can never know that he is in a Regenerate State; and with how much the more Evenness, Constancy, and Regularity, he hath gone on in a Course of Vertue and Piety, by so much the less likely will he be to know it, since he must be by so much the less sensible of any sudden and violent Change that hath happened at any Time within himself. And, as he cannot know that he is now Regenerate, so neither can he tell, that it will ever be possible for him to be so, because it is not possible that he should be so, but by an irresistible Operation of the Spirit, to which some Persons are immutably elected, and from which all the rest (without any Regard had to their Qualifications) are immutably reprobated. And so much for the Point of Regeneration.



DISCOURSE II.

OF SAVING,

O R

JUSTIFYING FAITH.

S I. **T**HE Doctrine of Regeneration being now, as I think, very clearly and fully stated; it will be proper to proceed to some other Questions which have a near Relation to it: the first and Principal whereof, is that concerning JUSTIFICATION. And there being (as is allowed on all Hands) so close a Connexion between these Two, that whosoever is Regenerate, is also Justified, and whosoever is Justified, is also Regenerate; there arises to us this Advantage, That as by determining the first Point, we must necessarily have gone a great way in determining the latter; so the latter also being rightly resolved, it must very much confirm and strengthen what has been advanced upon the former. This Question, indeed, could have required no distinct Consideration (or, at least, there would have needed very little to have been said about it) were it not for those Obscurities which have been cast about it by *Calvin* and his Followers. For, if he who is Regenerate, is also Justified, 'tis plain, that, if once I understand what that is by which, or in vertue whereof, I become Regenerate, I must, at the same time, understand what it is by which I am Justified. And this hath already been shewn to be Faith in Christ, and Obedience to his Commandments. But that which hath created so much Difficulty upon the Subject, is this, That *St. Paul* has somewhere taught us, That *a Man is justified by Faith, without the Works of the Law*; and that, *by the Works of the Law, no Flesh shall be justified*; which Assertions these Divines have so understood, as intirely to exclude Obedience from having any thing to do in the Business of Justification. And because the Sacred Writers, and even *St. Paul* himself, at other times, do speak of Faith as a Qualification which of it self, or alone, is of little Value in the Sight of God; this hath put them upon contriving Distinctions, and forced them to have Recourse to certain unintelligible Internal Acts, as Marks whereby to discriminate that Faith which justifies, from that Faith which does not justify. And thus, instead of plain and solid Instructions upon so necessary a Point, we are treated with the Froth and Jargon of the Schools; and the Dreams of Men have been obtruded upon us as Articles of our Faith. It is a Point, therefore, of no

small Consequence, to know, whether St. *Paul* be rightly interpreted, or not; and though I cannot promise the Reader, that I have any thing new to offer upon the Subject, this Dispute having already exercised the Pens of many great Divines of our Church, and particularly of the late Learned Bishop *Bull*, by whom it is very largely and very excellently handled; yet, perhaps, it may not be displeasing to those who have not the Opportunity of going to these larger Treatises, to see the Controversy, in it's material Branches, reduced to a narrow Compass.

§. II. IN order hereto, it will be necessary, first of all, to state the Notion of Justification. And concerning this, not to trouble you with the different Senses in which the Word may be found, it will be sufficient to take notice, that to justify, is, generally, throughout the whole New-Testament, and constantly by St. *Paul* in his Discourses upon this Subject, used in a Judicial Sense; denoting, when applied to God as the Person justifying that Act, Sentence, or Declaration, whereby he as our Judge determines or pronounces us just or righteous; and when applied to Man as the Person justified, that State or Condition towards God for or on the Account of which, he is now adjudged Righteous, and will be so pronounced at the last Day. The Places which shew this to be the true Sense of the Word, are too numerous to be here distinctly noted, and therefore I shall select only a few of them. As for Instance, *Rom. viii. 33. Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?* In which Words, τὸ δικαιεῖν, to justify, being manifestly opposed to τὸ ἐγκαλεῖν, to accuse, and also to τὸ κατακεῖναι, to condemn, can signify nothing else than to acquit or pronounce Righteous. So *Chap. iii. 4. Let God be true, and every Man a Liar, as it is written, that thou mayst be justified in thy Saying, and clear when thou art judged;* where the δικαιῶ, to be justified, is explain'd by νικᾷ ἐν τῷ κρινομένῳ, the overcoming in Judgment. Again, *Chap. vi. 18. Therefore, as by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, even so by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men to Justification;* where, by way of Antithesis, the Word Justification in the latter part of the Verse, answers to the Word Condemnation in the former. I shall name but one Place more, which is alone sufficient to decide this Matter; and that we meet with *Chap. iii. ver. 20. Therefore, by the Deeds of the Law, there shall no Flesh be justified in his Sight;* the Meaning of which Words must necessarily be this, That if God should judge Men by or according to the Works of the Law, no Man could appear righteous before him, or, which is the same thing, he could adjudge or determine no Man righteous. Now the same Justification which the Apostle denies to Works, the same he every where ascribes to Faith; which being Judicial in the one Case, in the other it must therefore be so also. This may suffice to shew the Sense of the Word Justify, especially considering that this Sense is not only allowed, but earnestly contended for by (r) those with whom I am now principally concerned. Hence therefore give me leave to observe the Mistake of those who have treated of Justification as if it consisted in the Forgiveness of Sin. That the Justification of a Man before God, supposes or implies Forgiveness of Sin, must indeed needs be true, because all are Sinners; But so far is it from being true, that to justify and to forgive are one and the same thing, that they are not so much as consistent together, with respect to one and the same Law; or (which comes to as much) they are not consistent with respect to the same Law, but under different Qualifications. He who forgives Sins committed against any Law, does, in that very Act, declare him whom he forgives, to have sinned against that Law. Now if a Man be

(r) Nos licet non negemus non unam esse istius vocis (sc. justificationis) significationem ——— pretendimus tamen ——— semper quoties Scriptura de Justificatione nostrâ ex professo loquitur, & tanquam in suâ sede, forensi ratione esse exponendam. *Turretin*, Loc. 16. Quæst. 1. §. 5.

declared a Sinner against any Law, he cannot also be justified or declared righteous according to that Law. This Point will be more fully explained afterwards; I shall now only add, that there being an inseparable Connexion between Righteousness and the Reward of Righteousness; *Justification* must therefore imply our Acceptance to eternal Life. Which, if it needed any other Proof, is very fully asserted by St. Paul, Rom. v. 8, 9, 10. *God commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were Sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from the Wrath through him. For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the Death of his Son, much more being reconciled, shall we be saved by his Life.* And verse 17. *If by one Man's Offence Death reigned — much more they which receive — the Gift of Righteousness, shall reign in Life.* Accordingly, in the following Verse, he calls *Justification* δικαίωσις ζωῆς, *Justification of Life*; and very frequently speaks of *Justification* and our Acceptance to it's Reward, as equivalent Terms. Thus Rom. iv. μίσθον λογίζεσθαι, *to impute the Reward*, in ver. 4. is the same with δικαιοσύνην λογίζεσθαι, *imputing Righteousness*, in ver. 3. And Chap. i. 17. ἐκ πίστεως ζῆν, *to live by Faith*, is the same thing with being justified by Faith. So that the full and adequate Notion of *Justification*, is this, viz. *That Act of God by which we are adjudged or declared Righteous before him, and as such accepted to the Reward of Eternal Life.*

§. III. HAVING thus stated the Notion of Justification, I shall, as Preliminaries to the whole, lay down Two Propositions, which being duly attended to, that which is to follow, will, I conceive, be exceeding plain and obvious. The First is, That none are or can be justified, but those who have fulfilled the Law, by which they are to be judged. The Reason is plain from what has been said: For those who are not Righteous, God cannot adjudge or declare to be Righteous; For *the Judgment of God is according to Truth*, as the Apostle speaks Rom. ii. 2. He cannot therefore adjudge or declare those to be Righteous, who have not fulfilled the Law by which they are judged, because the having fulfilled that Law by which a Man is judged, is the very Notion of Righteousness. And this is what St. Paul expressly tells us, Verse 13. of the same Chapter, *Not the Hearers of the Law are just before God, but the Doers of the Law shall be justified; i. e.* No Man can be justified by any Law which he hath not fulfilled. And upon this very Foot it is, that he all along argues against the Possibility of our being justified by the Law of Works, even because we are Transgressors against that Law. For thus he speaks Chap. iii. 9. *We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under Sin.* Now the Consequence of this you have Verse 20. *Therefore, by the Deeds of the Law there shall no Flesh be justified.* If then we cannot be justified by the Law of Works, because we have not fulfilled that Law, neither can we be justified by the Law of Faith, unless we fulfil that Law; for the Reason is in all Cases the same. The Reader, without doubt, will readily understand, that when I speak of our fulfilling the Law, by which we are to be judged, as necessary to our Justification, I mean fulfilling it in our own Persons; which I remark on purpose to remind him of the Conceit of some Modern Divines, who tell us, That we are not justified by our own inherent Righteousness, but by the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us. They are sensible, that without Righteousness, there can be no Justification; but then they say, that the Righteousness is in Christ only, and that his Righteousness by Faith becomes our Righteousness. Properly ours, insomuch that we may be truly said to be Righteous in Vertue or on the Account of the Righteousness of Christ. The Absurdity of this Notion must appear, at the very first View, to any one who will duly attend it; it being inconceivable, in the Nature of the Thing, that Christ's Righteousness should be ours, in any other than an improper Sense, viz. Either, 1st. As God is pleased to accept us as Righteous, for the sake of the Righteousness of Christ. Or, 2dly, as the Example of Christ's Righteousness, is a prevailing and effectual Motive with us

to be Righteous also. Wherefore I proceed to my Second general Proposition; which is this: That although, in order to Justification, our own Righteousness, with respect to that Law by which we are to be judged, is necessary, yet we must not ascribe so much to our own Righteousness, but that our being justified ought, nevertheless, to be esteemed a Matter not of Debt, but of Grace. For St. *Paul*, at the same time that he tells us that we are justified by Faith, tells us also, that we are justified *freely by Grace*; as you may see, *Rom. iii. 24.* and in several other Places. Whatever, therefore, it be which the Apostle means by *Faith*, *i. e.* whatever it be in Our-selves for the sake, or on the account of which, God adjudges or pronounces us Righteous; we must take especial care not to make it the Cause of our Justification in any Sense, but what is consistent with supposing and acknowledging, that it is through his free Mercy and Goodness that we are accepted or justified. How these Things are reconcileable, will be shewn in the Sequel of this Discourse. I now apply my self directly to the Point in hand, and because the Apostle's Assertion consists of Two Parts, the one the Affirmative, *viz.* That we are justified by Faith: And the other Negative, *viz.* That we are not justified by Works: I shall therefore proceed with a distinct Regard to them both; Shewing, 1. What that is to which he ascribes Justification under the Name of Faith; And, 2. What that is to which he denies Justification under the Name of Works.

§. IV. FIRST, then, I am to shew, What that is to which the Apostle ascribes Justification under the Name of Faith. Now, forasmuch as I have shewn, that we can be justified no otherwise, than by a Completion of that Law by which we are to be judged; and forasmuch as the Law by which we are to be judged, is the Evangelical or Gospel Law, *i. e.* that Law which was promulged or established by Jesus Christ; the Answer to this Question must therefore necessarily be this, *viz.* That the Completion of the Evangelical Law, is that to which the Apostle here ascribes Justification. Allowing, I say, the Truth of the Premises (which I hope have been sufficiently made good) the Inference is undeniable. For it will then rest only upon Something which the Question supposes, and which no Christian will deny, *viz.* That the Apostle has here given us a true Account of Justification. What then, I ask, is the Completion of the Evangelical Law? Or, what is that by which the Law of the Gospel is fulfilled? Why, plainly, Not Faith ALONE, strictly or properly so called; Not a mere Belief in Jesus Christ; Not a bare Assent to the Gospel Revelation; nor any Act of the Understanding relative to such a Belief: For the Evangelical Law not only proposes Truths to be imbraced, but Duties also to be performed; It is a Law of Practice, as well as a Law of Faith; Yea, it is much more a Law of Practice, than a Law of Faith; the End of our Believing what God has revealed, being that we may do what he has commanded. What, then, can be more evident, than that the Word Faith, in this Place, must not be understood in a strict and proper (*i. e.*) abstracted Sense, but loosely and figuratively, as denoting the Complex or whole Body of Christian Vertue, *i. e.* as denoting both Faith, strictly so called, and that Obedience also to which our Faith directs and engages us?

§. V. WE have brought this Point, you see, to a very short Issue; but I shall not leave it to rest here, intending presently to confirm this Sense by those Interpretations which St. *Paul* himself has given us of his own Meaning, and the concurrent Testimonies of the rest of the sacred Writers. But there is an Objection, which, because it will otherwise be apt to lye as a constant Burthen upon the Reader's Mind, it will be proper first of all to remove; and that is this, *viz.* That if it be necessary, in Order to Justification, that we fulfil the Evangelical Law, it must then be said, that no Man can be justified, who hath not paid a punctual Obedience to whatever the Gospel commands, in such a Sense as never to have offended; which (since all have offended) is

is to exclude all from Justification. Now, to this I answer; That though the Law of the Gospel, consider'd as the Law or Rule of Life, is, (as all Laws are and must be whilst they are such) always Obligatory, and, consequently, in this respect, no Man can be said to have fulfilled it, who hath not performed a strict and punctual Obedience; yet it must be observed, that consider'd as the Law or Rule by or according to which God will judge us; this Law will be fulfilled by our final Obedience only, *i. e.* (for this is what I mean by final) by our being at any Time found in a State of Obedience, and, especially at the last Day. The Reason is plain, *viz.* because the Gospel Law admits of Repentance, *i. e.* it promiseth, that at what Time soever a Sinner returns to Obedience, he shall be accepted. The Evangelical Law, therefore, is the Law of Judgment, only with respect to our final Condition; and, consequently, it must, as such, be fulfilled by our final Obedience: For he who repents, *i. e.* finally turns to God, has done all that the Law under this View requires from him. Now this is what I maintain, *viz.* That in Order to Justification, it is necessary, that we fulfil not the Law of Life, but the Law of Judgment, which are very different Things; for, to speak properly, it is one Law by which we are to live, and another Law by which we are to be judged. This will be plain, if we consider, that the Diversity of Laws ariseth either from the Diversity of the Matter or Things enjoined, or the Diversity of the Circumstances under which the same Things are enjoined. Thus, for instance, If a King enjoins two of his Subjects to pay each of them an hundred Pounds, for the publick Use. Here is then one and the same Law to them both. But there will be different Laws if either, 1st, one should be commanded to pay more than another; or, 2dly, if the same Sum being required of both, one should be commanded to pay it in the Space of One Month, and the other in the Space of Ten. Now it is in this respect only in which I say, that the Law of Life is one Law, and the Law of Judgment another. For, as to the Matter of them, they are indeed the very same, the same Duties being enjoined by both; but then, as to the Circumstances under which the same Duties are enjoined, they are manifestly distinct: For, whereas the one requires a constant and perpetual Obedience, the other requires, (as has been said) only a final Obedience. Nor let it shock the Reader, to hear (what, indeed, is somewhat different from the common way of speaking) that the Law according to which Men are to live, and the Law according to which they shall be judged, are different Laws. For, there is not the least Difficulty in apprehending the Thing; but, only, in case these Laws be supposed to be materially different. If the Law only forbids Treason, it would be absurd to hang a Man for Theft or Perjury: But there is no Absurdity in saying, that a Man is under one Law constantly prohibiting Treason, and shall be judged by another Law, which declares a Pardon, in case the Offender returns to his Loyalty.

§. VI. THE Sum is this; That he who is truly Penitent, has fulfilled the Evangelical Law of Judgment, though he has not fulfilled the Evangelical Law of Life; and the Obedience which I speak of, as necessary to Justification, is such an Obedience only, as is consistent with, or supposes the Benefit of Repentance. That such an Obedience as this, is, indeed, *necessary* to *Justification*, or that Faith exclusive of such an Obedience, will not justify, I have already proved, and hence I have inferred, that St. Paul, under the Word *Faith*, must be supposed to include Obedience, when he ascribes Justification to Faith only. I am now, according to my Promise, farther to make good this Point from those Interpretations, which the Apostle himself has given us of his own Meaning, and from what we are elsewhere taught in Scripture concerning this Matter; which way of Arguing rests upon these plain and uncontested Principles, *viz.* That forasmuch as the Sacred Writers, in declaring to us the Terms of our Acceptance with God, were all directed by the same Spirit, therefore they are always upon this Point consistent with themselves and with

one another; and, consequently, whatever it be to which Justification is ascribed in one Place, that must be supposed in all the rest, where the Means of Justification are spoken of, how great a Variety soever there may be found in the Words or Expressions by which these Means are signified or represented to us. Now, that St. Paul has ascribed our Justification to Obedience, as well as to Faith, is evident from *Gal. v. 6. In Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith, which worketh by Love.* By *availing* here, the Apostle plainly means *availing* (*i. e.* being of any Verrue or Efficacy) with respect to Justification; for he was now arguing against the Jews, who expected to be justified by the Law of Moses. These Words, then do very clearly set forth to us, that we are not justified by Faith alone, but by Faith in Conjunction with it's proper Effects. For, by *Love* here, we are to understand the Love of God; and to say that Faith then only availeth, when it worketh by Love, is exactly the same thing as to say, that what will avail, or stand us in any stead, is Faith and those Works of Love, *i. e.* of Obedience, to which our Faith doth lead and direct us. I say, of Obedience; for *this is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments.* This Sense will be farther evident from what follows, *Chap. vi. Verse 15. In Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision, but a NEW CREATURE.* In these Words, the Apostle says the same Thing of Circumcision, that he had said before, *viz.* that it availeth not; And what he denies of Circumcision, he here affirms of the New Creature, as he did of that Faith which worketh by Love in the other Place; which shews, that the Faith which worketh by Love, and the New Creature, are Phrases importing one and the same Thing. Now, forasmuch as the New Creature implies both Faith and Obedience, as has been already proved, the Consequence is undeniable, that by the Faith which worketh by Love, he means Faith and Obedience. Once more, The Apostle has ascribed Justification to Obedience in expresse Terms, as you may see, *1 Cor. vii. 19. Circumcision is nothing, and Uncircumcision is nothing, but KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD.* These Words are exactly parallel to those which I have already mentioned, and there is no possible Way of making St. Paul speak consistently with himself, than by saying, that as the Obedience he here mentions, necessarily supposes or includes Faith, so that Faith, when he speaks of it as the only Means of our Justification, does also suppose or include Obedience. I might farther have insisted upon that Saying of the same Apostle, *Rom. vi. 16. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield your selves Servants to obey, his Servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of Sin unto Death, or of Obedience?* εἰς δικαιοσύνην, unto (r) Justification; where, as Death is ascribed to Sin, so Justification is also ascribed to Obedience. I might likewise have taken Notice, that at *Rom. x. 16.* he explains the Word *πιστεύειν*, to believe, by *ὑπακούειν εὐαγγελίῳ*, obeying the Gospel; and that what he sometimes calls simply *πίστις*, Faith, he at other Times calls, *ὑπακοὴ πίστεως*, the Obedience of Faith, *i. e.* the Obedience which arises or proceeds from Faith, as you may see *Rom. i. 5, 16, 26.* But that which I have already offered, is, I think, abundantly sufficient for my Purpose; I shall therefore only add, That when I say, that St. Paul uses the Word Faith, as including Obedience, I mean no more, than that it is so used in all those Places where he ascribes Justification to Faith only. At other Times, I am well aware, that he speaks in a more confined Sense; having already shewn you one Place where Faith is plainly distinguished from it's Effects; and you may observe the same Thing, *1 Cor. xiii.* where he states the Comparison in Point of Excellency, between Faith, Hope and Charity. But, then, you must also observe at the same Time, as a Confirmation of what has been said, that when ever the A-

(r) Our Translation renders it, Of Obedience unto Righteousness. But St. Paul frequently uses *δικαιοσύνην* for *δικαίωσις*; and so it is used here, for it is opposed to *θάνατος*, Bull. Harm. Apost. Dissert. 2. Chap. iv. §. 9.

apostle does thus distinguish Faith from it's Effects, he is so far from telling us, that we are justified by Faith only, that he speaks of it comparatively as a mean and low Qualification, which is particularly remarkable in the Place just now referred to: *If, says he, I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have not Charity, I am nothing.* If I have all Faith, *i. e.* If I have (s) all kinds of Faith, even that Sort of Faith by which I should be enabled to work the greatest of Miracles, all this would avail me nothing; it would not render me acceptable in the Sight of God; nor consequently, justify me, except I had also Charity.

§. VII. Thus plainly has St. Paul asserted the Co-efficiency of Obedience in the Work of Justification; as if it had been on purpose to advertise us, that whatever high and lofty Encomiums he has elsewhere bestowed upon Faith, they must be understood of Faith in conjunction with Obedience. Let us now hear what the Holy Scriptures have in other Places taught us concerning this Matter; and who can desire a stronger Proof than those Words of our blessed Lord, recorded by St. Matt. Ch. xii. Ver. 37. *For by thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemned?* Or than those Luke xviii. 14. where our Saviour stating the Comparison between the Pharisee and the Publican, who went up to the Temple to pray, and observing the Humility and Contrition of the one, and the Pride and Self-sufficiency of the other, says, *I tell you, that this Man went home to his House justified, rather than the other?* Justified? How? Why, certainly, by his good Behaviour, or not at all: For, this was what our Saviour was speaking about. And does not this very plainly imply, that our Obedience is that whereby we must be justified? But the Words of St. James are of all others most full to the Purpose, Chap. ii. Verse 24. where, having professedly treated upon the Subject, he lays down this Conclusion, (in Words, indeed, differing from, but in Sense, as I hope to shew, agreeing with, that of St. Paul) *Ye see then, how that by Works a Man is justified, and not by Faith only.* What the Apostle means by Faith, it is by no means hard to understand, nor, if it were, is it at all material to inquire. For the main Stress of the Argument lies upon this, that Justification is here, in Part, expressly ascribed to Works, *i. e.* to Obedience. But of what Justification does the Apostle speak? Why, say some, not of our Justification before God, but of our Justification before Man; *i. e.* of the Declaration of our Faith before Man, which being an internal, and, consequently, an invisible Act, can, therefore, be known by others no otherwise than by a suitable Behaviour: This vain Conceit they endeavour to support principally by these two Reasons, *viz.* 1st, From the Words of the Apostle, *verse 18. Shew me thy Faith without thy Works, and I will shew thee my Faith by my Works.* And, 2dly, From hence, that Abraham is said to have been justified by the Sacrifice of his Son, whereas, say they, in the Sight of God he was justified long before. But, without tarrying to give an Answer to such Arguments as these, which every one, who has Sense, must see, are too frivolous to deserve an Answer, I shall lay down some plain Reasons to shew, that this Interpretation cannot be admitted of; and they are these that follow, *viz.* 1st, The Apostle does manifestly in part ascribe our Justification to Faith; for he saith, that *a Man is justified by Works, and not by Faith ONLY*; which implies, that Faith, though it be not indeed the sole, is yet the partial Cause of our Justification. But a Man's Faith, is declared or made known by Works only, because, as I said just now, it is an internal Act; and, consequently, in this Sense Faith cannot be so much as in part the Cause of our Justification. 2d, To suppose, that by Justification the Apostle means the Declaration of our Faith, is to make him talk palpable Nonsense. For, the De-

(s) For this is the meaning of πᾶσα πίστις. So πᾶσα γνώσις, is all Kinds of Knowledge; πᾶσα θλίψις, every sort or every kind of Tribulation. 2 Cor. i. 4. Id. Ibid. §. 6.

claration of Faith being substituted in the Room of Justification; the Sentence must run thus; *Ye see then, that a Man's Faith, is declared by Works, and not by Faith only*, than which, nothing can be more absurd. 3d, That when the Apostle says of *Abraham*, that he was justified by Works, his Meaning is, that he was justified before God, is evident from *verse 23*. For by this (*i. e.* the Obedience of *Abraham* perfecting his Faith) *the Scripture*, says he, *was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed in God, and it was imputed unto him for Righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God*. Now, in the same Sense in which he declares, that *Abraham* was justified by Works, in the same Sense he declares, that we are justified by Works also. 4. All this will be still more evident from *verse 14*. where the Apostle entering upon this Discourse, says, that Faith, *i. e.* Faith alone, or without Works, cannot save us. This was the Point he undertook to prove, and therefore, to this must his Conclusion relate, *viz.* That *a Man is justified by Works, and not by Faith only*.

§. VIII. I HAD not taken any notice of this Objection (which appears, I think, at first sight, to have no weight in it) but that I was unwilling to leave so material a Passage as this, liable to the least Doubt or Scruple. But, in truth, to mention Particulars under this Head, is an endless Work, for to this Purpose belong all those Places of Scripture (which, that I may just note it by the way, do no where more frequently occur, than in the Writings of *St. Paul*) where Obedience is insisted upon, as necessary to qualify us for Eternal Salvation. These Places, I say, do afford an incontestable Evidence of the Truth of what I am now advancing, and it would make a Man even sick, to see by what pitiful Subterfuges those who place Justification in Faith, exclusive of Obedience, endeavour to evade it. In general, they tell us, that (*t*) though we cannot be saved without Obedience, it may, nevertheless, be true, that we are not justified by, or in Vertue of Obedience. That it is one Thing to say, that Good Works are required as the Concomitants of Faith, and another Thing to say, that they are the Cause of Justification together with Faith. But the Reason of this subtle Distinction is to me utterly incomprehensible. For, 1. Whatever is the Cause of Salvation, is also the Cause of Justification; for these Two Things are inseparable; and the immediate Ground or Reason upon which we are saved, is that we are justified, as has been shewn. Give me leave then to argue in this manner: I am therefore saved because I am justified; I am therefore saved because I believe in Christ, and keep his Commandments. Therefore to believe in Christ, and keep his Commandments, is that by which I am justified. The first Proposition in this Argument is not to be disputed; and supposing the Truth of the Second, the Conclusion will be undeniable, so far, I mean, as to prove, that both Faith and Obedience, are, in some Sense, jointly the Cause of our Justification, *i. e.* in the same Sense in which they are jointly the Cause of our Salvation. Now then, 2. The Point is this, *viz.* Whether Obedience be not the Cause of our Salvation, in the same Sense in which Faith is the Cause of our Salvation? And that it is, is manifest: For Faith can be said to be the Cause of our Salvation, in no other Sense, than as it is a Condition, upon the Performance of which, Salvation is promised, and in this Sense 'tis notorious, that Obedience is the Cause of Salvation, as well as Faith. Either then it is true, that Obedience, together with Faith, is the Cause of our Salvation, or else it is not true, that even Faith is the Cause of our Salvation. But the Truth is, that they are both together the Cause of our Salvation, as they do both together constitute that to which, in Vertue of the Promise of God, Salvation is inseparably annexed. As to what is here com-

(*t*) Aliud est opera — requiri in persona quæ justificatur, quod concedimus; aliud in actu ipso seu causalitate justificationis, quod negamus. Nec si requiruntur opera ut concomitantia fidem ideo statuuntur esse causa justificationis cum fide. *Turretin. Loc. 16. Quæst. 8. §. 13.*

monly pretended, *viz.* That (u) Good Works are required only as a Sign or Declaration of Faith, it is neither Sense, nor, if it were, is it any thing to the Purpose. For, Obedience has a Tendency to signify or declare our Faith upon no other Account, than because our Faith leads us to Obedience, *i. e.* shews us something, which, in Vertue of the Divine Authority, we are bound to perform. The Necessity of Obedience, therefore, must be supposed antecedently to it's being a Sign of Faith; and how then is it possible, that the signifying or declaring our Faith, should be the Reason why it is required? Furthermore, St. James tells us, that Obedience is the Perfection of Faith; for, *by Works, says he, is Faith made Perfect.* If then Obedience be the Perfection of Faith, it cannot be required merely as a Sign of Faith, for the Sign has no relation to the Perfection of the Thing signified. — But I am ashamed to tarry any longer upon such manifest Trifles. Be it so, that Obedience is required only as a Sign or Declaration of Faith; yet still you grant, that it is required; and I say, that God hath made it a Condition of our Salvation, that we give, if you will so call it, this Sign or Declaration of our Faith. Shew me then, I say, if you can, how Faith it self is the Cause of our Salvation, any otherwise than under the Notion of a Condition, or confess your own Absurdity in excluding Obedience (which is also a Condition) from being, together with Faith, the Cause of our Justification.

§. IX. EITHER my Reason very much deceives me, or this Argument is unanswerable. But answered it must be; and how do they do it? Why, by such Cobweb Distinctions as you have already seen, which, if they had so much Sense in them as to bear Examination, I might, perhaps, have taken notice of. But instead of pursuing these Divines through their own endless Labyrinths, it will be more to the Purpose, somewhat more distinctly to explain what I mean by a Condition of Salvation, by which it will still be more evident, that Faith and Obedience have the same Relation to Eternal Life; and, consequently, that one is as truly the Cause of our Justification, as the other. A Condition of Salvation, then, as I said just now, is that upon the Performance of which God hath promised Salvation; and thus far the Thing is not capable of being made clearer. What I have now to add, is this, That forasmuch as it is the Nature of all Promises, to convey a certain Right to the Person to whom the Promise is made, every one therefore must be understood to have a Right to Eternal Life, who has performed the Conditions, upon the Performance of which Eternal Life is promised; and when God, in consequence of his Promise, bestows Eternal Life, the Performance of these Conditions must be considered as the immediate Reason or Motive with God, why he bestows it. The Performance, therefore, of the Conditions upon which Eternal Life is promised, is in this Sense the Cause of our Salvation, *viz.* As it is that in our-selves, for the sake or on the account of which, God bestows Salvation; and in this sense, I say, or under this Notion, it is, that Faith saves us. For he who requires me to believe, and promises, withal, that if I do believe, I shall be saved (which is manifestly the Case) does thereby very plainly declare, that he will save me, for the sake, or on the Account of my Faith. But then, if Faith be not the only Thing required; if the same God who commands me to believe, commands me also to obey, and promises Eternal Life as the Reward of my Obedience (which is likewise the Case) it is then plain, that both Faith and Obedience must be considered, as co-ordinate Means to one and the same End, *i. e.* that they do both of them together constitute that for the sake of, or on the Account of which, God will bestow upon us the Privilege of Eternal Life.

(u) Opera — requiruntur tanquam effecta & signa fidei quibus ejus veritas declaratur. Nam ut fides justificet hominem; ita opera justificant fidem. *Id. ib. §. 3.*

§. X. THIS Point, which almost every Page of the Gospel confirms, being duly attended to, it will be easy enough to see to the Bottom of all that Sophistry and Chicane, by which this Subject has been so much perplexed; and the Consequence which has before been laid down, will remain firm and undeniable, viz. That Faith and Obedience having the same Relation to Eternal Life, must therefore have the same Relation to Justification, which is the immediate Reason or Motive with God, why he bestows Eternal Life. And this will be further confirmed, by considering, in what sort God will proceed with us at the Day of Judgment: For the last Judgment will be nothing else than a Publick and Solemn Declaration of Christ our Judge, who are Righteous, and who are not Righteous; and, in Consequence of this Declaration, an Assignment of them to a State of Happiness, or a State of Misery. What then, I ask, is that Rule or Measure according to which this Declaration shall be made? I hope you will not say, our Faith only: For how often do the Scriptures tell us, that God will judge every Man according to his Works? And how plain is it, that the very Reason of our being called to appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, is, that every Man may receive the Things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be Good or Bad? If then we are to be judged according to our Works, as well as according to our Faith, must not then our Works, as well as our Faith, be the Ground or Reason, upon which we shall be justified or declared righteous? Why, look at *Matt. xxv. 34.* and you will see; *Then shall the King say unto them on his Right-hand, Come, ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.* The Reason follows in the next Words; *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink, &c.* These are the Premises; and I leave any Man, who has Sense, to draw the Conclusion.

§. XI. UPON the whole, then, I think, it plainly appears, that whether you interpret St. Paul by himself, or by what we learn from the rest of the sacred Writers, he must be supposed, under the Word Faith, to include Obedience, in all those Places where he ascribes Justification to Faith only. A Thing which there would need very little arguing about, if those who deny it, would duly attend to what, at the same Time, is very freely acknowledged by them. For, do they not tell us, that (w) *Faith alone, i. e. separated from all other Christian Virtues, will not justify, because in this Case it is not a True Faith?* Where then, I pray, is the Difference? Why, make the most of it you can, and it will amount to no more than a *quâ* or a *quatenus, i. e.* it will come to no more than this, viz. That, though that Faith which justifies, must be attended with all other Vertues, yet it does not justify, considered as attended with those Vertues. Vain and Foolish Contention! Was it, think you, the Business of an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and of that Apostle too, who every where expresses so great a Contempt of Human Wisdom and Philosophy, to teach such Metaphysicks as this! For my own part, I have other (and I think much more worthy) Notions of the first Preachers of the Gospel. I consider them as plain Men speaking to plain Men; and, therefore, when I hear them telling me in so many Words, that *Faith without Works, is dead being alone*, I presently conclude, that I must be justified by my Works, as well as by my Faith, because I can think of no other Reason by which a plain Man can be made to understand, why a true, lively, or justifying Faith, must be attended with Good Works, than this, that we must be justified by the one, as well as by the other. As to those Distinctions which Men of subtle Heads may fancy they espy, I should envy no Man

(w) Non quæritur an fides solitaria, i. e. separata à cæteris virtutibus justificet, quod fieri non posse facile concedimus, cum ne quidem sit vera & viva fides; sed an sola concurrat ad actum justificationis — Non an fides quæ justificat sit operosa — Sed an quâ justificat — sub tali quæstione spectanda sit. — Sola fides non justificat, sed fides justificat sola, *Id. Ibid. §. 6.*

the Pleasure of them, who would be contented to be wise and happy by himself. But 'tis intolerable to have such Conceits obtruded upon us, as if they were of the very (x) Essence of Christianity; especially considering how much danger there is, that those who think in the Common Road, and have not a Taste adapted to Delicacies of this sort, should (which, alas! has too frequently been the Case) when they are told, that they are not justified by good Works, lay hold of this ready and natural Inference, that therefore they may be justified and saved without them, and hereupon throw off all Manner of Care and Endeavour after Righteousness.

§. XII. BUT to proceed. If you would know the Reason why St. Paul has used the Word Faith, to express the Performance of all the Conditions of the Evangelical Covenant, it would be no hard matter to assign several not improbable ones; but the Chief I take to be this, *viz.* That Faith is the Source and Principle of Evangelical Righteousness; a Qualification without which, no Christian Grace can possibly subsist, and which being once supposed, all other Vertues will naturally follow. *Without Faith it is impossible to please God*, as the Apostle speaks *Heb. xi. 6.* For Faith is, as it were, the Door which opens to us the Way how to serve God acceptably. And supposing that a Man wisely considers, and lays to Heart what it is that he believes, it may as truly be said on the other side, that with Faith it is impossible not to please God; for he who believes, that Jesus came from God, receives his Doctrines as the Law of Life, and is under a firm Persuasion, that Eternal Life will be the Reward of his Obedience, and Eternal Death the Punishment of his Disobedience; Such a one, I say, cannot, unless he be very careless and inconsiderate, but earnestly set himself to the Performance of whatever he knows will render him acceptable to God, and as industriously avoid every Thing by which he knows He will be displeased. There being then so close a Connexion between Faith and Obedience, the one is not unfitly described by the other; and it may not be improper to observe, that for the very same Reason, the Word *Knowledge* is in Scripture made use of, to denote the whole of that Piety which we owe to God, and which is necessary to our everlasting Salvation; as you may see *John xvii. 13.* and in many other Places. So that there is in both these Cases a Metonymy of the Antecedent for the Consequent, or rather of the Cause for the Effect, by which something is affirmed of the former only, which in Strictness of Propriety in Speech, belongs to both taken together. This is a way of speaking common in all Authors, and in our ordinary Discourses one with another. For thus we say of any Person, That his Life might probably have been prolonged, if he had consulted some able and experienced Physician; or his Estate saved, if he had advised with some learned and skilful Lawyer; not that the bare Advice in either Case would have done the Work, but because it is supposed, that he who goes to a Physician for the Recovery of his Health, or to a Lawyer for the saving of his Estate, will, in those Cases, pursue such Methods as the Person with whom he advises, shall judge to be expedient. And thus it is, that Faith is said to justify us; not as if Faith alone were sufficient, but because it is supposed, that he who believes in Jesus Christ, will be led by his Faith to keep his Commandments.

§. XIII. I TAKE this to be a clear Account of the Use of the Phrase. I have now but one Objection to answer before I dismiss this Point; and that is this,

(x) It may, perhaps, be not unworthy the Reader's Observation, to see how magnificently Mr. Turretin has set forth the Necessity of believing (in Vertue of the foregoing Distinction) that Good Works are not so much as in part the Cause of our Justification. His Words are these. — Facile colligitur meram hic non esse Logomachiam, ut nonnulli perperam sibi fingunt: sed controversiam MAXIME REALEM & quidem TANTI MOMENTI ut in ea de PRÆCIPUO salutis nostræ agatur FUNDAMENTO quo subruto vel labefacto OMNEM FIDUCIAM & CONSOLATIONEM nostram, & in vitâ & in morte PERIRE necesse est. *Loc. 16. Quæst. 2. §. 6.*

viz. That if it be true, that we are justified by Faith and Obedience, *i. e.* by a Completion of the Evangelical Law; it must then be said, that Justification is a matter of Debt, and not of Grace, as the Apostle affirms; because it is a Debt due to those who are Righteous, to be adjudged or declared Righteous. Now, to this I reply, that though because God is just and true, he cannot but adjudge or declare Men to be what they really are, yet Justification will still be a Matter of Grace, and not of Debt; and that because, 1. It is intirely through the Mercy and Goodness of God in Jesus Christ, that he hath appointed that Law of Judgment, without which we could never have pleaded Righteousness before him. Were God to judge us by the Law of Unsinning Obedience (which he might if he had so pleased) 'tis certain, that no Flesh could be justified in his sight, because it is certain, that there are none by whom that Law hath not been violated. But forasmuch as he will not judge us by that Law, but, as has been said, by another Law, to wit, the Law of Repentance, that we are justified must needs be a Matter of Grace; for the Law itself being founded in Grace, the Righteousness pleaded by or according to that Law, must be founded in Grace; and if it be through Grace that we are righteous, it must also be thorough Grace that we are justified or declared righteous. This will be farther evident, if it be considered, 2. That Justification, as has been shewn, consists not merely in our being adjudged or declared righteous before God, but implies also our being accepted to the Reward of Eternal Life; which Reward being infinitely more than what we could claim, even in vertue of the strictest and most punctual Obedience, Justification therefore, must, upon this Account, be a Matter of Grace, although it were true, that our Righteousness is not a Matter of Grace. But indeed this Consideration does more effectually shew, that our Righteousness is a Matter of Grace; for the Reward of Eternal Life is the great Motive or Inducement which leads us to Obedience; and, surely, it is enough to cut off all Pretence of boasting, if not only we have done very little, in comparison to what God might have required, but we have been invited to do even that little by so rich and so gracious a Promise. After all, it must be acknowledged, that Justification is in this Sense a Matter of Debt, as it becomes (if I may so speak) our Due in Consequence of our having performed those Conditions, upon which God has declared that he will accept us. But as this Objection is not to be avoided upon any Hypothesis (since, whatever it be which justifies us, it can justify no otherwise than in virtue of the Divine Promise) it can therefore be of no Weight against this. The Truth is, that though the Scripture tells us, we are justified *freely by God's Grace*, yet it no where makes Justification to be an absolute Act of Grace, so as that none of the Praise of it belongs to us; for this is utterly inconsistent with it's being made to depend upon any Condition, and, consequently, destroys the very Notion of Justification, which, in the very Nature of it, must suppose a Condition, *i. e.* the fulfilling of that Law, with respect to which we are said to be justified.

§. XIV. But there is the less need to insist upon these Things now, seeing that to this Point may so easily be applied, what has been spoken at large upon (y) another Occasion. Wherefore, having (as I hope) cleared the first Branch of the Apostle's Assertion, by shewing you, what it is to which he ascribes Justification, under the Name of Faith, I proceed to inquire, in the next Place, what it is, to which he denies Justification, under the Name of Works, or (for thus he here, and elsewhere, very frequently expresses the Thing) *Deeds or Works of the Law*. This Inquiry is so much the more necessary, because here indeed lies the greatest Difficulty; and if it be true, what has too often been supposed, that by Works the Apostle means Works of Evangelical Righteousness, it must ei-

ther be concluded, that some great Mistake has been committed in stating the foregoing Point, or else, that he has flatly contradicted himself. There are Two Things then, which ought to be distinctly considered, *viz.* 1. What that Law is whose Works or Deeds the Apostle excludes from Justification? And, 2. In what Sense the Works or Deeds of the Law are excluded from Justification? Which Questions will be best resolved, by taking a View of the whole Dispute, as it lies in St. *Paul* himself, carefully observing the Persons concerning whom he speaks, and the Reasons upon which his Assertion is founded. To this Purpose I here propose to give you an intire Paraphrase of the first Four Chapters of this Epistle, which are the Ground-work of all that the Apostle has elsewhere advanced upon this Subject. And from hence I doubt not but I shall be able to make such Observations, as will shew, that the former part of the Assertion, as above explained, is so far from being overthrown, that it is confirmed and established by the latter. If the Reader then will be pleased to lay the Original before him, and go along with me from *Chap. i. Verse 16.* which is the Place where St. *Paul* first enters upon the Dispute, he will, I conceive, find him arguing to this Purpose, *viz.*

§. XV. "I AM not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; For, it is the Method
" which God hath appointed for the Salvation of Men. It is the Way of Sal-
" vation, first indeed to the *Jews* [who, by God's own Appointment, were
" vouchsafed the Privilege of being first called to it, *Acts* iii. 26. and *Chap. xiii.*
" 46.] But it is the Way of Salvation to every one that believeth, whether
" he be *Jew* or *Gentile*; forasmuch as the Purpose of God to justify all with-
" out Distinction, by their Faith (2) who shall embrace the Faith, is herein
" very plainly revealed, in conformity to what was heretofore spoken by the
" Prophet, *The Just shall live by Faith*, *Vers. 16, 17.*

"[AND as the Purpose of God, to justify those who believe, is revealed in
" the Gospel, so also] is his Wrath revealed against all Ungodliness and Unrighte-
" ousness of Men; (a) through whose wilful Corruption and Depravity it hath
" happened, that those Evidences which God from Time to Time hath
" given of himself, and his True Religion, have been obstructed and made in-
" effectual *verse, 18.* [That this is the Case with respect to the *Gentiles* is un-
" deniable;] For God hath sufficiently manifested himself to them; the Works

(2) *Eis pístin* is here put for *eis tās pistóntas*. Substantives are frequently used instead of Adjectives, or Participles. Thus *ἡ ἐκλογή* for *οἱ ἐκλεκτοί*, *Rom. xi. 7.* *ἀπειρομὴ* for *ἀπειρομήνους*, *Rom. iii. 30.* and the like. But that which confirms me in this Sense, is this, that in *Verse 22.* of the Chapter last quoted, the Apostle speaks expressly in this manner, calling the Righteousness or Justification of God, *δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ διὰ πίστεως εἰς πάντας τὸς πιστεύοντας*. The Expression is very emphatical, and the Design of it is to shew, not only that Justification belongs to those who believe, but that their believing is the Reason, and the only Reason, why they are justified.

(a) The Greek is *τῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κατεχόντων*, which, may be rendered either (according to our Translation) of those who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness, i. e. who are unrighteous under the Sense or Knowledge of the Truth; or of those who hinder, or suppress the Truth through Unrighteousness, for the Word *κατέχειν* bears both Senses, as you may see, *2 Thess. ii. 6, 7.* *1 Cor. xi. 2.* Now that which determines me to the latter Sense, in this Place, is this, *viz.* That otherwise the Words will have no Connexion with what follows, nor can they be applied to the Heathens; (who yet, it is certain, were the Persons, if not principally, at least partly, aimed at;) For the Heathens were unrighteous, not under the Knowledge of the Truth, but, under a gross Ignorance of the Truth; and this is what the Apostle directly charges them with *Verse 21.* where he says, That *their Hearts were darkened*; and that *professing themselves wise, they became fools*. The Case, therefore, was this; That that Heathens had the Evidence, which, if they had duly attended to it, would have led them to the Knowledge of God; on which account St. *Paul* (by an Idiom of Speech, familiar with the sacred Writers) says, that they *knew God*: For in fact, they had not the Knowledge of God, (as he expressly observes, *Verse 28.*) but fell into the most Wicked and Superstitious Idolatry (for which he severely reproveth them, *Vers. 22, 23.*) Now all this happening not through want of the Means of Knowledge, but through an Abuse of those Means, they are therefore said, through their Unrighteousness, *κατέχειν τὴν ἀλήθειαν*, to obstruct or hinder the Truth, i. e. those Evidences which God had given of himself, and his true Religion. This was in some sort true of the *Jews*, who, as our Saviour told them, had *set aside the Commandments of God through their Traditions*. But it was most remarkably true of them, after the Promulgation of the Gospel, which the Hardness of their Hearts would not suffer them to accept of. Accordingly, the Apostle continues the same Charge against them, as you will find in the next Chapter.

“ of the Creation being a Visible Demonstration of his Invisible and Eternal
 “ Power and Godhead. In this, therefore, they are inexcusable, that having
 “ such Evidences of God, yet they glorified him not as God, neither were
 “ thankful; but became wicked in their Imaginations: that amidst all this
 “ Light, they were yet in Darkness; and became Fools, under the highest Pre-
 “ tensions to Wisdom; changing the Glory of the incorruptible God, into an
 “ Image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beasts,
 “ and creeping Things, *Ver. 19—23.* Wherefore God also gave them up to
 “ Uncleaness, through the Lusts of their own Hearts, to dishonour their own
 “ Bodies between themselves; who had changed the Truth of God into a Lye;
 “ and worshipped and served the Creature, to the Dishonour of the Creator,
 “ who is blessed for ever, &c.”

WHAT follows in this Chapter, is only a farther Account of those A-
 bominations which God suffered the Gentile World to fall into, as a Pu-
 nishment for their Idolatry; which, carrying no difficulty with it, needs
 not therefore to be explained. Now it is to be observed, that this Ac-
 cusation, seems to have been laid against the *Gentiles*, chiefly with a De-
 sign to introduce, with less Offence, a like Charge against the *Jews*, who,
 'tis certain, were the Persons against whom the Design of this Epistle was
 principally levelled. To these, therefore, he applies himself, *Chap. ii.* “There-
 “ fore thou art inexcusable, O Man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for
 “ wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy self; seeing thou that
 “ judgest, doest the same Things, *Verse 1.* As for our-selves we are assured, that
 “ the Judgment of God is according to the Rules of Truth and Equity, and
 “ consequently, lies equally against all, who commit such Things [whether
 “ they be *Jews*, or whether they be *Gentiles*;] And art thou, who art so for-
 “ ward to judge others, so vain as to believe, that whilst thou art guilty of
 “ the same Things thy self, thou shalt escape the Judgment of God? Or, de-
 “ spisest thou the Riches of his Goodness, and Forbearance, and Long-suffering,
 “ and (not considering that the Goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance)
 “ after the Hardness and Impenitency of thine own Heart, treasurest up to thy
 “ self Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judg-
 “ ment of God? [I say, the righteous Judgment of God; for, this, assure
 “ your selves that] (b) in the Day, when God, according to the Tenor and
 “ Purport of that Gospel which I preach, shall judge the Secrets of Men by
 “ Jesus Christ, he will render to every Man according to his Deeds; to them,
 “ who [having (c) laid hold of the Means of Salvation now offered by the
 “ Gospel

(b) That the Apostle's Discourse from *verse 11*, to *verse 17*. is Parenthetical, in divers Places, any one must observe, who will carefully read it over; though in stating the Connexion, there may, perhaps, be some Difficulty. To me, the Sense seems to be most clear, by joining *verse 16*, to *verse 10*, which is the Method I have followed in the Paraphrase above.

(c) That the Persons here spoken of, as those upon whom God would bestow *Eternal Life*, are those who should believe and obey the Gospel, seems to me very clear. For, both *Jew* and *Gentile*, without the Gospel, are by the Apostle declared to be in a State of *Sin* and *Condemnation*; And the Promise of *Eternal Life*, cannot here be supposed to be annexed to a mere Nullity. But, if it be made to those, who *patiently continued in well-doing* under the Moral Law (or indeed under the Law of *Moses*, without the Grace of the Gospel) it is then, in the Apostle's Account, annexed to a mere Nullity, because in his Account there were no such Persons. Nor can the Consideration of Repentance have here any Place, because, (as you will see more fully by and by,) the Gospel is the only Method propounded, by which, Remission of Sins, which is the Benefit of Repentance, was to be obtained. The Thing, therefore, directly intended by the Apostle, must be this, *viz.* That God would give eternal Life to those, who, in consequence of their having embraced the Promise of God, offering Pardon and Reconciliation by Jesus Christ, should, by patient continuance, in well-doing; seek for Glory, &c. And, in a Sense correspondent to this, must the Threatning be interpreted. Give me leave only to observe, That though this was what the Apostle directly and primarily intended in this Place, yet neither must the Promise, nor the Threatning, be so limited to those to whom the Gospel of Christ was or should be offered, as not to be supposed virtually to include the one; all those good Men in every Age, who have (like *Abraham*) accepted of the Overtures of Mercy propounded by God (which, as will hereafter be explained, is, in a general Sense to embrace the Gospel;) and the other, all those who have either rejected these Overtures, or without them,

have

have lived in a Neglect of, or an Opposition to that Light which God has given them. For the Threatning is extended to *every Soul that doth Evil*; which must be understood in a Latitude proportionable to that which the Apostle had before said *Chap. i. Verse 18. viz. That the Wrath of God is revealed against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men.* In which Place, it is plain, that the *Gentiles* are considered not as under the Overtures of Grace, but as under the Light of Nature.

(e) The Greek is *οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῶν*—*φύσει τὰ τῆ νόμου παιῆς*; By which the Apostle did not mean to assert, that the Gentiles had any of them fulfilled the Moral Law (because this contradicts what he has asserted over and over, viz. that all were Sinners) but only, that the Moral Duties of the Law were understood and practised among the Gentiles, as, indeed, they were, though all had transgressed in many Instances.

“ God, as if you were not circumcised. Yea, so little is there in this Pretence,
 “ that the very *Gentiles* [whom ye so much despise] would, upon Supposition
 “ that they had fulfilled the natural Law, be accepted of God without Circum-
 “ cision, whilst you, who are under the written Law, and are Sinners against
 “ that Law, shall stand condemned with Circumcision. For the End of the
 “ outward Circumcision in the Flesh, was, to lead Men to the inward Circum-
 “ cision of the Heart; and therefore, he who is without the latter, cannot be
 “ a true *Jew*; he cannot be one of those to whom the Promises belong,
 “ merely in Vertue of the former, *Verse 25, to the End of the Chapter.*

“ BUT if this be the Case, you will say, what Advantage then hath the *Jew*?
 “ or, what is the Benefit of Circumcision? *Chap. iii. Verse 1.*” This Objection
 the Apostle considers under two distinct Views, 1st. With respect to the Means
 and Opportunities, which God had vouchsafed the *Jews* above the *Gentiles*; And,
 2. With respect to the present State or Condition of both, as to their Justification
 before God. To the Question under the first of these Views, he answers, that
 the Advantage which the *Jews* had above the *Gentiles*, was “ much every way;
 “ chiefly (says he) because that unto them were committed the Oracles of
 “ God; they lived under a clear and expresse Revelation of the Divine Will,
 “ and thereby enjoyed those Degrees of Light, which the *Gentiles* had not,
 “ *verse 2.* [And although the *Jews* did not make a right Use of these Means,
 “ yet were not these Advantages therefore the less.] For what if some did not
 “ believe? shall their Unbelief make the Faith of God without effect? God
 “ forbid; yea, let God be true, and every Man a Lyar, as it is written, that
 “ thou mightest be justified in thy Saying, and clear when thou art judged.
 “ The Gift of God to them was the very same, how small soever the Effect of
 “ it was through their Unbelief; For their Unbelief could not disannul the
 “ Promises of God. But, on the other Hand, their Unbelief, when com-
 “ pared with the Means they were under, would render them inexcusable,
 “ and justify the Righteousness of God in his Dealings with them, *ver. 3, 4.*”
 This Reasoning suggested an Objection to the Apostle’s Mind, which he stops
 a little to answer; and then comes to consider the Question under the Se-
 cond View before mentioned, *viz.* Whether the *Jews* had made such an Use
 of the Advantages, which they had above the *Gentiles*, as to be really in a
 better State, with respect to Justification, than the *Gentiles* were; as to which
 he again declares, that there was no Difference between them, all of them
 being Sinners. For thus he proceeds, *ver. 9.* “ What then? Are we better
 than they? Are the *Jews* in a more hopeful State before God, than the “ *Gen-*
 “ *tiles* are? No, in no wise; for we have before proved against both, that
 “ that they are all under Sin. As it is written, *There is none Righteous, no, not*
 “ *one*; which are the Words of the Psalmist, whereby he continues the Description
 of the Sinful Estate of the *Jews* (as he had before that of the *Gentiles*) to *ver.*
 19. where he closes the whole with this general Conclusion, *viz.* “ That every
 “ Mouth was stopped, and all the World become guilty before God.” What
 now is the Inference which he draws from hence? Why, you have it in the
 next Verse, “ Therefore by the Deeds of the Law, there shall no Flesh be ju-
 “ stified in his Sight. For, by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin.” That is
 to say, By the Law all stand convicted of Sin, and therefore by the Law none
 can be justified. But from this wretched and miserable Condition, God was
 now pleased to offer a Release; for thus he proceeds; “ But now God’s
 “ Method of Justification, without that Obedience to the Law [which all have
 “ failed in;] of which Method both the Law and the Prophets have born
 “ Witness; [This Method, I say] is now made manifest, to wit, the Justifi-
 “ cation which is by Faith in Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all that believe.
 “ [I say, unto ALL and upon ALL] For there is no manner of Difference in
 “ this respect between *Jew* and *Gentile*; ALL have sinned, and come short of
 “ the Glory of God; and, therefore, ALL must be justified freely by the Grace
 “ of

“ of God, through the Redemption which is by Jesus Christ; whom God
 “ (who is patient and long suffering towards us) hath now set forth to
 “ be a Propitiation for ALL, through Faith in his Blood, to declare his own
 “ way of bringing us to Justification by the Forgiveness of our past Sins, that
 “ he might be just [in fulfilling what he hath promised] and the Justifier of
 “ him that believeth in Jesus. Thus then all Foundation of Boasting is intire-
 “ ly removed; not indeed by the Law of Works” (according to which, as
 the Apostle by-and-by observes, whoever is justified, hath *whereof to glory* :)
 “ But by the Law of Faith, *ver. 21, to 26.*” And now we are got to that
 Passage, which is the Subject [of the present Dispute, and which I shall e’er
 long very fully explain; “Therefore we conclude, that a Man is justified by
 “ Faith, without the Deeds of the Law.” The *Jews* were to be justified by
 Faith in Christ; and thus, the Apostle again inculcates, should the *Gentiles* be
 justified as well as they; For, “Is God the God of the *Jews* only? Is he not also
 “ of the *Gentiles*? Yes, of the *Gentiles* also. Seeing it is one God who shall
 “ justify the Circumcision by Faith, and the Uncircumcision through Faith.
 “ Nor let it be said, that we make void the Law through Faith; for, in Truth,
 “ we establish the Law, *verse 21. to the End of the Chapter.*”

THE Substance of the Apostle’s Reasonings, then, is thus far unquestionably
 clear, *viz.* That both *Jews* and *Gentiles* being Sinners, the latter against the Law
 of Nature, and the former against the Law of *Moses*, there was therefore a Ne-
 cessity upon both, to lay hold of God’s Offer of Pardon and Reconciliation
 by Jesus Christ; of which, Faith in Christ, was now made the only Condi-
 tion. And this comes fully up to the Sense of the Proposition at first laid
 down, and which was to be proved; to wit, That the Gospel is the Power of
 God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth. The Point, therefore, being
 now made good, he proceeds, in the next Place, to illustrate it by the Exam-
 ple of *Abraham*, which was a very proper way of arguing against the *Jews*, who
 owning him to be the Head from whom they derived all their Privileges,
 could therefore in reason expect to be justified no otherwise, than as he was
 justified. Concerning *Abraham*, then, the Apostle thus puts the Question, *Chap.*
 4. “What shall we say then, that *Abraham* our Father, hath found according
 “ to the Flesh? How, I pray, stood the Case with him? Was he justified by
 “ Works, or was he not? *Verse 1.* If he was, it must be owned, that he had
 “ whereof to glory; but it is plain, that before God, he had nothing whereof
 “ to glory, nor was he therefore justified by Works. For what saith the Scri-
 “ pture? *Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for Righteousness.*
 “ [Does not this make good what I say? Certainly it does.] For to him that
 “ worketh, *i. e.* to him who fulfilleth the Law, and so justifieth himself by
 “ his Works, to him, indeed, the bestowing the Reward annexed to Justifica-
 “ tion, becomes a Matter of Debt, and not of Grace; [And, therefore, had
 “ this been the Case of *Abraham*, he would, as I said just now, have had where-
 “ of to glory. But his Case was plainly otherwise; his Faith, you see, was
 “ COUNTED to him for Righteousness, which supposeth, that he had not ful-
 “ filled the Law] For then only is Faith COUNTED for Righteousness, when
 “ he who hath not fulfilled the Law, is accepted on the Account of his be-
 “ lieving the Promises of God, justifying him whilst he is a Transgressor of
 “ the Law, *ver. 2-5.* Accordingly, *David* describing to us the Blessedness
 “ of the Righteous Man, speaks of him, not as of one who had fulfilled the
 “ Law, but as of one who was justified by the free Mercy of God, through
 “ the Forgiveness of Sins. Saying, *Blessed are they whose Iniquities are forgiven,*
 “ *and whose Sins are covered; Blessed is the Man to whom the Lord will not impute*
 “ *Sin,* *ver. 6-8.* I ask then, Cometh this Blessedness upon the Circumcision
 “ only, or upon the Uncircumcision also? [Since it is so plain, that all who
 “ have heretofore been justified, were justified, not by their Works, but by
 “ their Faith in the Promises of God, offering Pardon and Reconciliation; do

“ you not think, that the *Gentiles*, if they accept of the Overtures of God’s
 “ Mercy made by Jesus Christ, shall be justified, (f) as well as you? Why,
 “ in this Point also, the Case of *Abraham*, will give you Satisfaction;] For
 “ we say, that Faith, was reckoned unto *Abraham* for Righteousness. How
 “ then was it reckoned? When he was in Circumcision, or, when he was
 “ in Uncircumcision? Was it before he was circumcised, that he was justified
 “ by his Faith? or was it after? ’Tis plain that it was before; and that he re-
 “ ceived the Sign of Circumcision, as the Seal or Evidence of his being justified
 “ in vertue of that Faith, which he had yet being Uncircumcised. [To be justi-
 “ fied by Faith, therefore, is not a Privilege annexed peculiarly to Circumci-
 “ sion; for if it were, *Abraham* could not have been justified, before he was
 “ circumcised. But you see, that *Abraham* was justified, before he was circum-
 “ cised;] and in this he is a Pattern and Example to ALL that believe, who
 “ shall be justified, though they be not circumcised; and a Pattern also to those
 “ who are circumcised; who shall be justified, likewise, if they are not only
 “ circumcised, but walk also, in the Steps of that Faith of our Father *Abraham*,
 “ which he had being yet uncircumcised; [that is, if, according to his Ex-
 “ ample, they embrace the Promises of God, and consequently, do accept of
 “ those Offers, which are now made by the Gospel.] *Ver.* 9–12. For the
 “ Promise, that he should be the Heir of the World, was not made to *Abraham*,
 “ or his Seed, through Obedience to the Law (which was not then in being,
 “ nor was given ’till above Four hundred Years after, *Gal.* iii. 17.) but through
 “ the Righteousness which was by Faith; which it will be absurd to say, if they,
 “ and they only, who are of the Law, be Heirs. Yea, upon this Foot the Promise
 “ it self will be of none effect [because none will have any claim to it;] For
 “ the Law worketh Wrath [*i. e.* by or through the Law all are become sub-
 “ ject to Wrath; and, therefore, by the Law, there can be no Right to the
 “ Promise. He who claims a Promise, by the Law, can claim it no other-
 “ wise, then in virtue of a Legal Obedience; but Legal Obedience there is
 “ none, for, as I said before, all have sinned. So far, therefore, is it, from
 “ being true, that the Inheritance is to be obtained by the Law, that the Law
 “ is, (g) accidentally become the Means of setting us at the greater distance
 “ from it, as having been the Occasion of involving us under that Guilt, which
 “ we could never have incurred, if the Law had never been given. Sinners
 “ indeed we should have been, but we could not have been Sinners against the
 “ Law;] for where there is no Law, there is no Transgression, *ver.* 1–15.
 “ But therefore hath God appointed that the Inheritance should be of Faith,
 “ that we might have no Merit to plead, but that it might, as I said before,
 “ be the free Gift of his Grace; and to the Intent also, that the Promise
 “ might be sure to all the Seed of *Abraham*; not to that only which is of the
 “ Law, but to that also, which follows the Faith of *Abraham*, who according
 “ to what is written of him (*viz.* That he should be the Father of many Na-
 “ tions, and not of one Nation only] is the Father of us all; even of all who
 “ believe, whether they be of the Law, or not of the Law; in like manner as
 “ God, in whom he believed, is the Father of all *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, *ver.*
 “ 16, 17. It was that signal and eminent Faith of his, by which without the least
 “ doubt or hesitation, not only without, but against all the Grounds of Human
 “ Expectation, he embraced the Promises of God, which was imputed to him
 “ for Righteousness. And it was not written for his Sake only, that it was im-

(f) There were two Things, chiefly, which prejudiced the *Jews* against the Gospel. The one was, that it
 was a Charge of Insufficiency against their Law, which they held in so great Esteem, as to expect Justification
 by it; and the other, that it set the *Gentiles* upon the same Foot with themselves, to whom they thought the
 Promises of God were absolutely confined. These two Points, though very distinct in themselves, the Apostle
 (who seldom observes Strictness of Method) frequently intermixes in this Dispute, as any attentive Reader will
 easily perceive.

(g) Compare these Verses with *Chap.* 7. *ver.* 7, to 12.

puted, but for ours also, to whom Faith shall likewise be imputed, for Righteousness, if we believe in Him, who raised up our Lord Jesus from the Dead, who was delivered for our Offences, and was raised again for our Justification," *Ver. 18. to the End.*

§ XVI. AND here the Apostle's Argument receives its final Conclusion; in explaining which, if I have not (and I dare not be positive that I have) hit upon the exact Meaning of every particular Passage, I am confident, that I have not erred from the main Scope and Design of the whole, which (as I before said) was to shew, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, being all Sinners, they had, therefore, all need to come to Christ for Justification; and that if they did, the one should be justified, as well as the other. Let us now see whether the Questions above propounded, will not, from what has been said, admit of satisfactory Answers. And, First, If it be inquired, What that Law is, whose Works or Deeds the Apostle excludes from Justification; I answer, That the *Jewish* Law, or Law of *Moses*, is directly and primarily intended; For the Law is not so much as once mentioned, 'till we come to *Chap. ii. ver. 12.* where the Apostle is arguing against the *Jews*, who were under the Law, in contradistinction to the *Gentiles*, who, he says, were without the Law. In what follows, he is speaking still to the same Persons, and of the same Law, and (that I may just take notice of it by the Way) whenever *ὁ νόμος*, the Law, is indefinitely used, the Word, in St. Paul's Language especially, has a peculiar Emphasis, to denote the Law of *Moses*, as every one must have observed, who has read his Epistles with an ordinary Care. But forasmuch as the Law of *Moses* was partly Moral, and partly Ceremonial, it may, therefore, be farther asked, Whether the Apostle's Meaning was to exclude, absolutely, the whole Law, from Justification, or, so much only of it, as was Ceremonial; which I so much the rather mention, because some Writers, who have treated upon this Subject, have supposed, that the latter only was intended. And this, it must be owned (were it true) would be a very short and easy way of ending the Dispute, there being not the least Appearance of a Contradiction, in affirming, that we are justified by the Works of Evangelical Righteousness, and denying, that we are justified by an Observance of the Rites and Ceremonies of the Mosaic Law. But this Notion I can by no means agree to; not only because the Apostle speaks of the Law, absolutely, and without any distinction, but because the whole drift of his Reasoning shews, that it was his Design to exclude the Moral, as well as the Ceremonial Law from Justification. The Reason why the Apostle excludes the Law from Justification, is (as I have often said, and as you very plainly see) because all were Sinners against it. Now this Reason extends itself to the whole Law, both Moral and Ceremonial; yea, it was principally true with respect to the Moral; for the *Jews* were more apt to be backward in Moral Duties than they were in External and Ritual Performances. I observe farther, that all the Transgressions mentioned *Chap. iii. from ver. 10, to ver. 19.* and on the account of which, the Law is excluded from Justification, are Breaches of the Moral Law; from whence it follows, that the Moral Law must be intended; And, of what Law can the Apostle be understood to speak, *ver. 31.* where he asks, *Do we then make void the Law through Faith?* (*i. e.* by ascribing, that Justification to Faith, which we deny to the Law) *Yea, we establish the Law.* Does the Preaching of Faith, think you, establish the Ritual Law of *Moses*? Finally, the Apostle, by one and the same Argument, excludes the *Gentiles* as well as the *Jews* from Justification. But the *Gentiles* were only under the Moral Law, and, therefore, the Moral Law, as well as the Ceremonial, must be excluded from Justification. Now then,

§ XVII. SECONDLY; If you ask, In what Sense the Apostle excludes the Works of the Law from Justification? I answer, That they are excluded no otherwise, than consider'd as abstracted from Evangelical Grace, *i. e.* from the

Grace or Mercy of God, freely declaring, or promising Acceptance through the Forgiveness of Sin. Concerning Works performed under and in consequence of this Grace, (of which Sort, are the Works of Christian Obedience; concerning this Sort of Works, I say) the Apostle says not one Word; yea, the very Nature of the Argument, shuts them out of the Assertion: For a Man's having sinned against a Law, can be no Reason why he cannot be justified by that Law, any otherwise than as that Law is supposed to require a strict and punctual Obedience; or (which is the same thing) any otherwise than it is supposed not to admit of Forgiveness. For, in case a Law does not require a strict and punctual Obedience, 'tis plain, that a Man may be justified by it, though he be a Transgressor. By the Law of Works, then, the Apostle plainly meant, the Law of perfect Obedience, and by the Law of Faith, that Law by which we are accepted through or on Condition of Faith, without a perfect Obedience. And when he said, that by the Deeds of the Law no Flesh should be justified, or, (which is all one) that a Man is justified without the Deeds of the Law, his Design was only to teach the *Jews*, that none of them could be justified by any thing that could be pleaded by, or according to the Law, antecedently to the Grace of God, freely imputing Righteousness to them, through the Forgiveness of their Sins. He considers the Law as the Rule of Life, enjoining or commanding certain Duties to be performed; and he shews them that they were all Sinners against this Law, to convince them, that they had all Need of Mercy; and all this with a Design to lead them to that Gospel, by which Mercy was now freely offer'd to them.

§. XVIII. THIS is the Sense to which the Nature of the Apostle's Argument unavoidably carries us. Now there were two gross and capital Errors which prevailed among the *Jews* at that Time, and which made this Way of Arguing both proper and necessary. The first (for which they were severely reprov'd by our Saviour, *Matt.* xxiii. 23. and in several other Places) was, that it was (*h*) of little or no consequence, whether they observed the Moral Precepts of the Law, provided they stuck close to the Ritual; the other, that whatever Sins were committed against the Law, they were to be fully expiated by those Sacrifices which the Law appointed: So that, upon the whole, the *Jews* were as well ignorant of the sinful State and Condition they were under, as of the true Means of procuring a Releasement from it. But the Apostle endeavours to convince them of both; setting before them, in the first Place, their heinous Violations of the Eternal Law of Righteousness, in Consequence of which they were become obnoxious to Wrath and Condemnation, and more excusable, even than the Gentiles themselves; and then, in the next Place, directing them to the Blood of Jesus Christ, the great Propitiatory Sacrifice, by which, and by which only, those who believed in him, should obtain Remission. This sending them, I say, to Christ, as the only true Propitiation, was a very manifest, though tacit, Charge of Insufficiency against the Legal Sacrifices to put away Sin; which is what the Apostle very plainly told the *Jews* of upon another Occasion: *Be it known unto you, Men and Brethren*, says he, *that through this Man (Jesus Christ) is preached unto you the Forgiveness of Sins, and by Him, all that believe are justified from all Things (i. e. from Transgressions) from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses; i. e. (for so with the learned Doctor Hammond, I understand the Place) of which those several Ways of Expiation appointed by the Law, could procure no Remission, Acts* xiii. 38. I must here observe, that when I speak of Remission, I mean, a perfect or plenary Remission, *i. e.* a Remission which reaches the Conscience of the Offender, and clears him from the Imputation of Guilt; for some Sort of Remission must be allowed to the Legal Sacrifices. But of what sort was it? Why, it was a

(*h*) See this Point spoken to at large, *Bull. Harm. Dissert. Post. Cap.* 16. 17.

Temporal Remission, or a Releasement from certain Temporal Punishments, which were threatened to the Transgressors of the Law: This, I say, was all that the Legal Sacrifices could procure; and this, (by the way) they did only in certain Cases; for some Transgressions there were, which were not at all to be expiated by Sacrifice. But farther than this, they had no Effect in any Case: For though the Punishment was remitted, the Guilt of the Sin still remained not to be done away, otherwise than in virtue of the one great Sacrifice, which was to be offered up at the End of the World, of which the Sacrifices under the Law, were but Types and Shadows. And thus the Author to the *Hebrews* (who is generally supposed to have been St. Paul himself) states the Case: *For the Law* (says he) *having a Shadow of good Things to come, and not the very Image of the Things, can never, with those Sacrifices which they offered Year by Year, continually make the Comers thereunto perfect*——For it is not possible that the Blood of Bulls and Goats should take away Sin, Chap. x. 1, 4. It sanctified indeed (as he tells us, Chap. ix. 9, 13.) to the purifying of the Flesh; but it could not make him that did the Service perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience. This he ascribes only to the Blood of Christ (verse 14.) who having offered himself as a Sacrifice for Sin, by that one offering, for ever perfected them that are sanctified. But was there then, you'll ask, no perfect Remission to be had under the Law? Yes, most certainly; For he who is justified before God, must have this Remission: Now *Abraham*, you see, was justified, and the Apostle tells us, that in virtue of the Covenant made with him, and his Seed after him, of which Circumcision was the Sign, or Seal, ALL of the Circumcision who walked in the Steps of their Father Abraham, were justified as well as he. And this is the very thing which he is all this while aiming at, even to convince and satisfy the *Jews*, by what Method *Abraham* was, and all after him, were, and must be, justified; which being the very Method propounded by the Gospel, they would, when once they understood it, instantly perceive the Vanity of trusting to Legal Performances, and the Necessity they were under of coming to the Gospel. How, then, was *Abraham* justified? Why, not by his Works; Not because he was not a Sinner; but, by his humble and ready Submission to the Will of God, offering him, upon those Terms, Favour and Reconciliation. And how were his Children under the Law justified? Why, not because they were not Sinners neither; nor yet by the Legal Sacrifices, which could not take away Sin; but by submitting themselves also to the Will of God, and trusting to his Promises, according to the Example of *Abraham*. Now this, I say, is the very Method which was propounded by the Gospel. For what is the Gospel, but a Declaration of the Promises of God, in and through *Jesus Christ*, now made manifest (when the Fullness of Time was come) to be the Author of eternal Salvation? If then they would be justified with faithful *Abraham*, they must follow the Faith of *Abraham*, and laying aside all Confidence either in their own Innocency, or in any other Method of Reconciliation, obey God's Call and embrace his Promises, as *Abraham* did.

§. XIX. UPON this Foot, the Apostle's Reasoning is plain and conclusive; upon any other, it is past my Skill to make it so. For, on the one Hand, whatever it concludes against the *Jews*, in Case they accepted not the Gospel, the same it more strongly concludes against the *Gentiles*; and, on the other Hand, whatever it concludes in Favour of the *Jews*, in Case they did accept the Gospel, the same also it concludes in Favour of the *Gentiles*; and the Conclusion, with respect to both, is, that which the Apostle undertook to prove, to wit, that the Gospel is the only Method of Salvation. To come now, therefore, to the Point; Since it appears, that the Apostle, when he says, that we are not justified by Works, excludes Works from Justification, no otherwise than considered as antecedent to, or abstracted from, the Grace of God promising Acceptance through the Forgiveness of Sin; 'tis plain, that this Assertion leaves us under

the

the utmost Liberty to suppose, that under, or in conjunction with, this Grace, Works may be necessary to Justification. For, there is no Inconsistency, in saying, that we cannot be justified by Works without the merciful Forgiveness of God, and in affirming, that Works are, in a certain Degree, the Condition upon which that Forgiveness is offer'd. Now this is manifestly our Case; For, we acknowledge, that we are all of us Sinners, and consequently, that we cannot be justified without that Pardon which is freely offer'd us by and through Jesus Christ: But then we say, that this Pardon is offer'd us no otherwise than upon Condition of our Obedience, *i.e.* our future or final Obedience, and in this Sense it is, that we affirm, that Works are necessary to our Justification: We ascribe Justification to Works, therefore, not consider'd as abstracted from Evangelical Grace, but consider'd as under or in Conjunction with it. In which Account we shall agree with *St. Paul*, as *St. Paul* will also agree with himself, when he says, that we are justified by Faith, if under the Word Faith he includes Works of Evangelical Obedience. Now, that he does, has been already shewn, and will yet more fully appear by the Case of *Abraham*. For, let us consider what it was by which he was justified; Was it his Faith, alone? Was it a mere Belief in the Promises of God, consider'd as distinct from its proper and genuine Effects? Or, was it his Faith in conjunction with that Obedience to the Divine Will, which he was directed to by his Faith? Why, common Sense might sufficiently convince any Man, that it was the latter. But if you would know how the Holy Ghost has resolved this Question, the Author to the *Hebrews* will inform you; who having observed (*Chap. x. Verse 38.*) *that the Just shall live by Faith*, goes on (*Chap. xi.*) to exemplify it in this Manner. *By Faith Abel offer'd unto God, a more excellent Sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained Witness that he was Righteous; God testifying of his Gifts——By Faith, Noah being warn'd of God of Things not seen as yet, moved with Fear, prepared an Ark, to the Saving of his House, by the which he——became Heir of the Righteousness which is by Faith. By Faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a Place which he should after receive for an Inheritance, obeyed——sojourn'd in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Country——offered up his only begotten Son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy Seed be called.* Thus the Apostle: And now, pray, ask your self; What was it by which *Abel* obtained Witness that he was Righteous? Why, you are expressly told, that it was his Offering (through Faith) a more excellent Sacrifice than *Cain*. Again, What was it by which *Noah* became Heir of the Righteousness which is by Faith? Why, you are also expressly told, that it was his preparing (through Faith) an Ark to the saving of his House. So that neither of these were justified merely by their Faith, but by their Faith in conjunction with their Obedience. And was not the Case of *Abraham* the same? Must it not be said of him likewise, that he was justified not merely by his Faith, but by his Obedience to the Divine Call? If you can yet doubt, hear *St. James*, *Was not Abraham our Father justified by Works, when he had offered Isaac his Son upon the Altar?* He answers himself, in the very next Words, *Βλέπεις, Thou seest how the Case stands; His Faith wrought with his Works, and by Works was his Faith made perfect; and the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for Righteousness, Jam. ii. 21, 22, 23.*

§. XX. BUT concerning the Doctrine of *St. James*, enough has been said in the foregoing Part of this Discourse; It was my Business now to shew, that *St. Paul* teaches the same Thing, which I hope I have done, and which I do not well see how it can be done, if the Method I have pursued be not admitted of. There are, besides this, but Three Ways, by which a Reconciliation between these Two Apostles has ever been attempted. The first supposes, that *St. Paul* speaks of our Justification before God, and *St. James* of our Justification before Man, which has already been refuted. The Second, That whereas *St. Paul* speaks of a True Faith, *St. James* speaks of a False and Hypocritical Faith

Faith. But against this there lie these unanswerable Objections, *viz.* That the Faith which St. *James* speaks of, is a Faith of which he approves, and which wants nothing but Works correspondent to it, to make it effectual towards Justification. *Thou believest*, says he, *that there is one God; Thou dost well*, Verse 19. And Verse 24. *Ye see then, that by Works a Man is justified, and not by Faith only*; which implies, as has before been observed, that Faith, though it be not the Sole, is yet a partial Cause of Justification. Now these Things cannot be affirmed of a False or Hypocritical Faith, which in Truth is no Faith at all: For neither does it deserve Praise, nor does it contribute any Thing to our Justification. Furthermore, the Faith of which St. *James* speaks, is such a Faith as *Abraham* had; and who will say, that the Faith of *Abraham* was False and Hypocritical? This way, therefore, of solving the Difficulty, can by no means stand. Nor will they succeed better, who say, Thirdly, that whereas St. *Paul* speaks of our First Justification, *i. e.* of our first Admittance to the Grace and Favour of God, St. *James* speaks of our Second and Final Justification; and, in consequence of this Distinction, would have us believe, that with respect to the one, Faith alone is sufficient, but that both Faith and Obedience are necessary to the other; For the Notion of Justification is the same, whatever State or Condition a Man is under, to wit, his being accounted or adjudged Righteous before God; and there is no more Reason to say, that we are at first accounted Righteous merely in virtue of our Faith, than there is to say, that we are so accounted merely in virtue of our Faith, at any Time afterwards. The First Justification of a Christian, is that which he receives when he is first made a Christian, *i. e.* when he is made a Member of Christ by Baptism. Now Baptism is an Act of Obedience, and that Repentance which is necessary to qualify us for Baptism, is likewise an Act of Obedience; there is, therefore, the same Relation between Obedience and this First Justification, that there is between Obedience and the Second or Final Justification. True it is, that more Duties are required of a Man under the Covenant, than are necessary to this Admission into the Covenant; so that in this respect there is indeed a Difference between that which justifies us at first, and that which justifies us afterwards. But the Point is not merely, whether there is a Difference, but whether the Difference lies precisely in this, that whereas Faith and Obedience are both necessary, as to the Second Justification, Faith alone is sufficient as to the First; and it is plain, that it doth not, because Obedience is alike required in order to both. The particular Acts of Obedience may not indeed be the same in both Cases, because the Measure of Obedience is not the same. But Faith cannot be alone in either, but must be attended with such an Obedience, as is proper to the State or Condition we are under.

§. XXI. It is then a fair Presumption (to say no more of it) that the foregoing Method of reconciling St. *Paul* and St. *James* is the true one, that no other rational Method can be thought of. And now having shewn what is the Scriptural Notion of Saving or Justifying Faith, it may be expected, perhaps, that I should proceed to consider the Opinions of those who have explained it otherwise. Now this I should be ready enough to do, if there were any one general Notion, that I could fix upon. But Error has no certain and standing Rule; and so it is, that those Divines who have contradicted the Truth in this particular, do not more differ from it, than they do from one another; not to say even from themselves. But how widely distant soever they are, as to some particular Circumstances, yet they all meet at the last (and so it must needs be) in one common Road of Darkness; and I must say, with the learned Bishop *Bull*, that it requires (i) *ὑπερᾶλλον μέγεθος ἀσχιωσίας*, a superlative measure of Acuteness and Sagacity, to be able clearly to explain and reconcile what they

(i) Ibid. Dissert. prior. Cap. 4. § 4.

say upon this Subject. (k) To *hunger and thirst after Righteousness; to fly, to lay hold of, embrace, lean, rest, roll upon, cleave unto God or Christ*, these are the Phrases by which the Formality of justifying Faith is set forth differently, by different Writers; by which, if their Meaning were to describe to us the Temper of a Man, under an intire Submission to the Will of God, they would say as we say, *viz.* That we are justified not by Faith alone, but by Faith in conjunction with Obedience. But since this is what they do not intend, it can signify nothing to inquire what they do; 1. Because upon this foot the Words can have no sound Meaning at all; and, 2. Because whatever it be that they are supposed to signify, we may be very sure, from what has been said, that it is not that by which we are justified. But there is one Notion which I very clearly understand, and which it may be proper just to mention by Way of Caution; and that is, that justifying Faith consists in a Man's being under an absolute Assurance, that he is in a State of Salvation, or, which is all one, that he is already justified. This Notion, which, to the great Shame and Scandal of the Reformation, hath been maintained by many, even of our own Divines, appears, at the very first sight, to be both absurd and dangerous. The Danger of it appears from hence, that it makes the Justification and Salvation of Men, to depend not upon the Judgment of God concerning them, but upon their own Judgment concerning themselves; so, that let a Man, on the one Hand, be never so wicked, he will yet be justified, if he can but have the Confidence to think that he is so; and, on the other Hand, let him be never so upright, he may yet not be justified, through some pitiable Mistake, which his Weakness may lead him into, and to which by how much the less apt he is to think highly of himself, he will always be by so much the more exposed. But what Sense is there in saying, that a Man is Justified by believing that he is justified? To me the Thing is utterly incomprehensible. For if God hath made our Justification to depend upon any Conditions, as undoubtedly he has, these Conditions must be performed; and, consequently, a Man must be actually justified, before he can in reason believe that he is justified; upon which foot it is plain, that this Belief cannot be the Cause, but the Effect or Consequent of Justification. And if a Man be so unreasonable as to believe, that he hath performed these Conditions, when he hath not performed them, 'tis monstrous to imagine, that such an unreasonable Belief shall justify him. It would be no hard matter to pursue this Point more at large; but I think it would be an Abuse of my Reader's Patience, to dwell upon a Mistake which is in it self too gross not to be taken notice of. I shall, therefore, add Two general Observations from the whole, and with these put an end to this Discourse.

§. XXII. AND, First, from what has been said, we may be able to give a clear and satisfactory Answer to a Question which has caused much Trouble to some Divines, *viz.* What is the Difference between that Faith which justifies, and that Faith which doth not justify. For if the Meaning of this Question be this, What is the Difference between that Faith which alone justifies, and that which alone doth not justify? the Answer is obvious, That there is just the same Difference between the one and the other, as there is between a Thing which is, and a Thing which is not; for there is, as has been shewn, no Faith which alone justifies. But if the Meaning of the Question be, What is the Difference between that Faith which leads to or effects Obedience (for this upon the present foot is the only Sense in which Faith can be said to justify) and that Faith which doth not? I answer, That there is no essential Difference between them. For Faith is a firm and undoubted Assent to the Gospel Revelation, which, therefore, must be supposed in every one that is said to believe;

(k) Vid. Ludov. Le Blanc Theol. de Fid. Justif. Nat. & Essentiâ.

Now, Assent is a simple Act of the Mind, and admits of no other Difference, than what relates to its Permanency or Constancy of Continuance; and in this Circumstance it is, that the Faith which works Obedience, differs from that which doth not. The one is ready at hand upon all Occasions, and both reminds us of our Duty and of our everlasting Interest, when we have most need to be awakened into a just Sense of them. The other is flitting and uncertain; hovers about us in our easy and pleasant Hours, but is driven away when once the Storm of Temptation ariseth. Now this Difference being founded in the State or Disposition of the Will, by which the Mind applies it self, more or less, attentively to consider the Object of our Faith; we may from hence, Secondly, discover the Vanity of our modern Enthusiasts, who will sometimes ascribe a Saving Faith, or a Saving Knowledge, to such a Power as is proper to affect the Understanding only. Thus, for instance; some will tell us, That *(l)* without an effectual powerful Work of the Holy Spirit, creating, and, by his Almighty Power, inducing, a New saving Light into the Minds of Men, they are not able to discern, receive, understand, or believe savingly, Spiritual Truths, or cannot receive Spiritual Things in a Spiritual Manner. Others, That *(m)* no Man can spiritually or savingly understand and believe the Truths of the Gospel, without an inward immediate Revelation of the Spirit, shining in upon the Heart, and enlightening and opening the Understanding. And yet, at the same Time, these Men will grant, that a Man may literally, speculatively, and historically understand and believe these Things, without the help of this New Light or Revelation, (whatever it be) even by a proper use of his natural Faculties. Now this is such gross and palpable Nonsense, that were it not for the Pomp of Words with which it is disguised, it must be obvious to the most ordinary Understanding. For if by understanding the Truths of the Gospel *literally, speculatively, and historically*, they mean understanding and believing them as they really are, but not reducing them to Practice (which is the only sound Sense, that can be put upon these Words) 'tis ridiculous to say, that a Man may do this without a New Light or Revelation, and yet at the same Time, to pretend, that he wants this New Light to enable him to believe or understand them savingly. For, when once a Man rightly apprehends, and firmly believes the Truths of the Gospel, the Understanding has done all, that it is proper and possible for it to do; And if after this he does not understand, or believe them spiritually and savingly, the Fault lies wholly in the Will, which doth not apply it self to consider of, and to conform it self to, what the Understanding judges to be fit and reasonable. To speak Sense, therefore, it should be said either, 1. That no Man can understand or believe the Truths of the Gospel at all, without this New Light or Revelation: Or, 2. If they grant, that a Man may understand or believe these Things, and only alledge, that he cannot do it savingly, the Case supposed should be, not that he wants any New Light or Revelation (for this is proper only to affect the Understanding, which is supposed already to be sufficiently informed) but, that he wants some Assistance of another sort (distinct from mere natural Abilities) which is proper to influence the Executive Powers. This latter is true, but then it doth not suit with their Purpose: For the great Use which they make of this Principle, is, not to reform Mens Practices, but to impose upon their Understandings; It is not to shew what is necessary to make them act consistently with their Faith, but to lead them to believe, as they believe, in contradiction to the clearest Evidences of Common Sense and Reason. Do but undertake to argue against their Principles, and they will answer your Objections by telling you, they are *carnal Reasoning*. "And when they have run themselves upon manifest Absurdities, they will come off by pretending, that these are Mysteries not to be understood without the Illu-

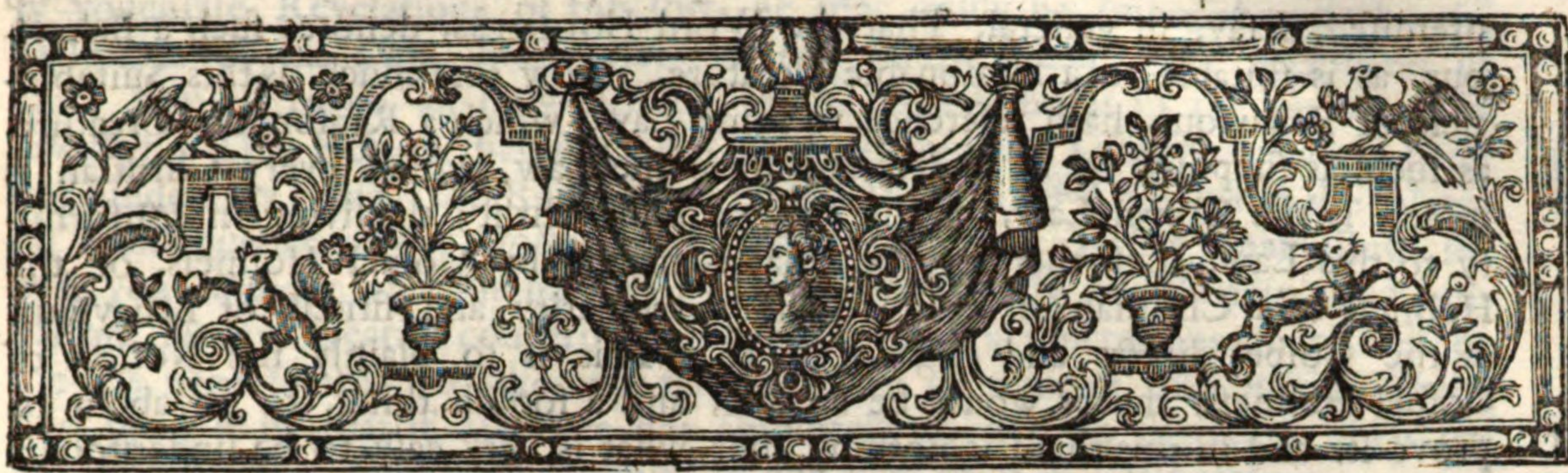
(l) See Dr. Clagett Introd. to Par. 1.

(m) Barclay Apol. Prop. 2.

“mination of the Spirit, and, therefore, Natural Men, as you are, cannot un-
 “derstand them. ’Tis true, they make Use of Scripture very often, and pre-
 “tend, that they believe nothing, but what they are able to prove from thence;
 “but then, if you make it never so plain, that they argue weakly, and alledge
 “Scripture impertinently, this will not serve your Turn; for you will be told,
 “That you have not as yet received, that new saving Light which can only make
 “you understand Spiritual Things Spiritually.” Thus they deceive the Igno-
 rant and Unwary! But how could they deceive, if they would speak so as to
 be understood? Should they take upon them to say absolutely, That though
 the Scriptures are a Compleat and Perfect Revelation of God’s Will, yet they
 are not to be understood and believed without another Revelation; who would
 believe them? or how could they believe themselves? Again, should they say,
 That after a Man, by the Use of the Scriptures, has got a right Faith, he can-
 not live a Holy and a Christian Life, without a new Light or Revelation; the
 Impertinency of the Assertion, with respect to such as want to be satisfied
 about the Truth of their Doctrines, would be as visible as the Falshood of it.
 One way, therefore, was only left, *viz.* To turn the Whole into a most Sub-
 lime and Mysterious Piece of Nonsense, and thereby to seem to say something,
 when in Truth they say nothing at all. But they do not more impose upon
 others, than (if they be in earnest) they have imposed upon themselves. And
 the great Misfortune is, that when once Men have habituated themselves to this
 way of Thinking, or rather Talking, they have intirely removed themselves out
 of the reach of Conviction. For when once a Man comes to have renounced
 his Reason, which is the Case of all who flee to this New Light, ’tis ridicu-
 lous to suppose, that there is any good to be done with him in the Way
 of Reason.



D I S-



DISCOURSE III.
CONCERNING
GOSPEL HOLINESS;
OR
SANCTIFICATION.

§. I. * **W**ITH the foregoing Points concerning Regeneration and *
Justification, that concerning SANCTIFICATION has a very Part II.
close Connexion. That Holiness is an indispensable Con- Chap. 6.
dition of Salvation, no Man can deny; and for this Sect. 1.
Reason, one would hope it should be no hard matter to understand what it is; †
But some Men will tell us, That it is, "in the Nature of it, *abstruse* and *
" *mysterious, undiscernable to the Eye of carnal Reason*;" and under this Pretence,
several things have been advanced concerning it, not only false, but dangerous,
" tending both to betray the Comfort of the Good, and (which is worse) to
" hinder the Repentance of the Wicked. I make no question, but that the
" Pure in Heart, know the excellent Advantages of Holiness, better than the
" Carnal Mind, so continuing, can know them; for Experience instructeth and
" convinceth more effectually than dry Argument. And I believe, no Man
" can describe the Joys of the Holy Ghost in that manner, that one who is
" *alienated from the Life of God*, may thereby attain such an understanding of
" them, as the Godly Man has, by the Sense and Feeling of them." But as
to the Nature of Holiness, I am far from believing it to be a hard matter, to
make even a wicked Man understand what it is, as I now hope to shew in a
very few Words.

§. II. THE Word HOLINESS, is diversely made use of, both by Sa-P. 243.
ered and Profane Writers. Sometimes it signifies a bare Relation, where-
by those Persons and Things are said to be holy, which are devoted to
some Religious Use, at other times it imports some particular Actions or
Qualities, proper to intelligent and rational Beings. Now it is in this latter
Sense, in which we are to understand the Word Holiness, in this Dispute;
for we are inquiring, What that Holiness is, by which one Christian is di-
stinguished from another? Whereas in the former Sense, the Term is applica-
ble

ble to all Christians in general; for all Christians are, by their Profession, dedicated to God, and in this Sense, consequently, are all holy. * This being premised, I say, in general, That the Word HOLINESS, denotes such a Behaviour, as is suitable to a Reasonable Creature. Now forasmuch as this Suitableness of Behaviour, hath reference to some Law, which a Reasonable Creature, as such, is supposed to be under, and since the Law, which every Christian is under, is the Gospel Law, or the Law of Jesus Christ; the living in conformity to this Law, must therefore be what is meant by Gospel Holiness, or the Holiness of a Christian; *i. e.* it is such a regularity and fitness of Behaviour, as the Gospel directs and engages us to. This is so plainly the Notion of Gospel Holiness, that it would be an idle, and a foolish thing, to go about to prove it, and in this there is nothing, but what is very easy to be understood†. But some, not satisfied with this plain and easy Notion, have, indeed, made it, “a very abstruse and mysterious, and, to say the Truth, an unintelligible Thing,” as you will easily grant, I suppose, when once you come to hear, what they have said about it. Now there are two ways, by which the Notion of Holiness, has been corrupted, *viz.* “1. By adding something to its Nature, “which doth not belong to it;” and, 2. By taking away from it that which does. To each of these Particulars, I shall, therefore, say something, as briefly as I can.

§. III. As to the former of these ways, by which the Notion of Holiness has been corrupted, we are told, “1. That it must be *the Fruit of electing Love*, * “*i. e.* of a Man’s being absolutely elected to eternal Salvation:” * Which, were it true, seems very impertinently offer’d, in order to explain what Holiness is. For I am never the nearer, understanding the Nature of Holiness, by being told, that the Elect only are, or can be Holy. If, indeed, a Man’s being elected, could be considered as a part of Holiness, this would go some way towards shewing what it means†. But this is impossible: For the Antecedent Cause, cannot enter into the Notion of any thing which Election must necessarily be, with respect to Holiness, if Holiness be (as they say it is) the Fruit of Election. To say, that a Man’s being elected, is an essential part of Holiness, is in other Words to say, “That if a Man not elected, attains to the same Vertue and Piety which is in one of the Elect, it is not Holiness in the former, though it is so in the latter.” * Now this placing Holiness, in part, at least, not upon the inherent Qualifications of Men, but in the Decree of God, concerning their future Condition; which is just as good Sense, as if in the Definition of the Nature of Loyalty, you should include the Favour of the Prince, and say, that if a Subject be never so faithful in his Service, and zealous for his Honour, yet he is not loyal, unless he has the Assurance of a Post of a Thousand Pounds a Year. It were a low Task, to expose Men merely for talking out of the Way; but the Notion is dangerous, as well as absurd. For, next to the actual Enjoyment of God, in a Life to come, our greatest Happiness consists in having comfortable Expectations of it in this; and these must always bear a Proportion to the Assurance we have of our having attained to that Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord†. But what Comfort can a good Man find from such Principles as these? Let us suppose him to be careful to please God in every Instance of his Duty; that he *hath escaped the Pollutions that are in the World, through the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*; in a Word, let us suppose him (so far as human Frailty will allow) to be every way perfect; yet all this is not Holiness, unless also he be of the Number of the Elect. And how shall he know, that he is elected? By the Integrity of his Obedience? Not so; for this is often found, for a Time at least, even in those who are not elected. There is therefore (so far as I can perceive) no way left, but God’s inspiring into a Man the Knowledge of his Election; And what is this, but to make “a new Revelation necessary to the Comfort of good Men;” * which if any Man has so much Sense, as not to expect, there is plainly

plainly no Comfort for him, or if he weakly believes, that God doth ordinarily vouchsafe Revelations of this sort, he may easily be imposed upon by the Delusions of his own Imagination (as too many, I fear, have been) and so fancy himself to be an holy Person, when, indeed, he is in the very *Bond of Iniquity*†. This Notion therefore, not only destroys the Comfort of good Men, but hinders (as I said) the Repentance of the Wicked: * And this is the Natural Consequence of the Doctrine of absolute Election, under what View soever you consider it. But having, as I hope, effectually overthrown this Foundation, in my Treatise concerning the Holy Spirit's Operations there will be the less need for me to take any farther Pains to remove this Superstructure. For, plain it is, that if Men are not absolutely Elected to Salvation, their being thus Elected, cannot be Holiness or any Part of it †. Wherefore,

§. IV. SECONDLY, I proceed to another Notion, which is, that Holiness must be an *infused Habit*, * which I could readily agree to, might I have the Liberty of explaining the Phrase. But as you have seen under the Head of Regeneration, by these infused Habits, they do not mean a regular Bent or Disposition of Mind to Vertue, wrought in us (indefinitely) by the Holy Spirit of God, (which indeed, is that which constitutes the Nature of Holiness) but certain Qualities, put into the Soul all at once by an Almighty Operation. Now this I say, That wheresoever there is in the Mind a due Conformity to the Law of the Gospel, there is true Holiness, whether there be any such Habits as those Men speak of, or whether there be none †. But it is a very strong Presumption, that there are no such Habits, because the Scripture speaks not one Word about them; and it is very certain, that Holiness doth not consist in such Habits as these, because the Scripture commandeth us to be Holy, which would be a strange sort of Precept, if Holiness were something which is infused into us by an Almighty Operation of the Spirit. I say, farther, that where there is a due Conformity of Mind to the Law of the Gospel, there is Holiness, whether this Conformity hath been wrought by Care and Exercise, or whether it hath been effected (which rarely, if ever, happens) all at once. For the Manner in which a Thing is done, does not alter the Nature of it; and what can be more absurd than to imagine, “ That if one Man should by “ Patience in well-doing, gradually arrive to a good Disposition, which is suddenly infused into another by the Miraculous Power of God; the former “ is not holy, though the latter is? If there were any need to confute so gross “ a Conceit as this; it may be done by the following Instances: The Apostles “ were by a sudden Inspiration, enabled to speak divers Languages; but if another Man should, by Study or Conversation, attain a like Skill, the Effect is “ plainly the same, though the Causes differ; the Skill is the same, though “ infused into the former, but acquired by the latter. Again; When our Saviour turned Water into Wine, he added nothing, by the Miraculous Operation, to the Nature of Wine, which is still the same, whether it be produced by a Miracle, or by God's ordinary Blessing upon natural Causes.” In like manner, Whether the “ good Disposition we are speaking of, be instantaneous or gradual,” whether it comes by an irresistible Power, “ or by “ the Assistance of the Spirit co-operating with our Endeavours, the Effect is “ still the same.” And if it be Holiness in the one case; it must be Holiness in the other. Now the ill Consequences of this Notion are plainly the same with those of the Former: For, First, * If the having certain Qualities infused or put into the Soul by an irresistible Power, be essential to Holiness†, “ It will be hard to offer a good Reason to any Man that has a Mind to “ be excused, why he should endeavour” to be holy. “ For, I understand “ not what can be reasonably said to excite a Man to endeavour after that, “ which it is impossible, in the very Nature of the Thing, to obtain, by endeavouring.” * Now this is the Case, if this Doctrine be true; for though good Habits may, indeed, be acquired by Exercise, as that Phrase signifies a prevail-

prevailing Inclination to do the whole Will of God, yet, as it denotes Supernatural Qualities, infused by an Almighty Power, (which is the Sense in which these Divines use it) 'tis plain, that it cannot, as any one must see, but those
 † who are not willing to understand †. Secondly, “ This Persuasion is equally
 * “ dangerous to the Comfort of good Men, who cannot upon this Ground be
 * “ reasonably satisfied of their own good Estate.” * For how shall a Man know that he has these infused Habits? Either they are sensible, or they are not: If not, they can be known no otherwise, than by a private Revelation, and if they are sensible, they can be so no otherwise, than by their proper Effects, *i. e.* by some sudden and violent Change, which is perceived in the Mind. But there are Thousands and Ten Thousands of good Men in the World,
 † who never perceived any such sudden and violent Change in themselves †; and the more constantly and early a Man has been trained up in Piety and Vertue, the less Sensible must he be of any such Change; and if, after an ill
 * Beginning, a Man has arrived to an habitual Practice of his Duty, yet if he hath done it in the Way of Diligence and Industry (which is most commonly, if not always, the Case) he has so much the less Reason to ascribe it to a sudden, irresistible Operation. So far then, as I am able to judge, “ the best
 “ Way that a Man can take to be sure that he is holy, is never to endeavour
 “ in the least to be so, but to live in an utter Neglect of all the Means of
 “ Grace, and to be altogether careless about mending his Life. For if, while
 “ he is in this State, he finds himself, all on a sudden, to be an Habitual good
 † “ Man (as the Elect will sometime or other) he may be sure, that Spiritual
 “ Life is infused into him, and that he is therefore an Holy Man, because his
 “ Good Habit could not be acquired by the Use of Means, since he used no
 “ Means, to obtain it.”

§. V. “ THIS is the plain Consequence of this Opinion,” which is alone sufficient to overthrow it; Wherefore, I now proceed to the other way, by which, as I said before, the Notion of Holiness has been corrupted; and that is, by taking that away from the Nature of Holiness, which does indeed belong to it. Now this they do when they separate from Holiness both Moral
 * Vertue, * and Christian Obedience; which two things, why, and how far, I distinguish, the Reader will presently perceive. As to the first, they tell us plainly †,
 P. 247, † That “ *Holiness differs essentially from all Moral Habits of our Minds, however ac-*
 248. “ *quired or improved, and they will not allow Moral Duties, whatsoever they be,*
 “ *to be any Part of Gospel Obedience.*” Now, to shew the Falseness of this Assertion, it will be proper, in the first Place, to state the true Notion of Moral Vertue, and then to compare it with the Notion of Holiness, as above described; for by doing this, we shall be able clearly to see what Difference there is between them. In general, then, *Moral Vertue* signifies,
 P. 249, “ *A prevailing Inclination of the Mind, to those Manners, or to that Way of Life,*
 250. “ *which is best for a Reasonable Creature.* It is called *Vertue*, because the proper
 “ Strength, Force and Vigour of a reasonable Creature, consists in his Goodness, *i. e.* in a Temper of Mind, and Course of Life, agreeable to right
 “ Reason. For, we do then exert that Fortitude, which is proper to the Excellency of our Nature, when the Man governs the Beast; *i. e.* when Lust
 “ and all Bodily Passion is subdued to the Law of our Mind. It is called
 “ Moral, because it is conversant about the Manners, *i. e.* the Customary Dispositions and Actions of Reasonable Creatures as such; in Opposition to
 “ Corporeal or Physical.” Which expresseth that Power or Energy in Natural Bodies, “ by which God governs the rest of his Works. But there is besides
 “ this, another Sense of the Word *Moral*, and that is, When it is opposed to
 “ *Positive.* In this Sense *Laws* are said to be *Moral*, which are of Natural and
 “ Perpetual Obligation; as, That *God is to be obeyed in all that he requires*; That
 * “ *we are to do unto all Men as we would be done unto*; and the like; * and those are said to be *Positive*, which we are bound to, not by any intrinsic Goodness that

that there is in the Things commanded, but merely by the arbitrary Will and Imposition of the Law-giver; of which sort were all the Ceremonial Laws amongst the *Jews*, and are the Institutions of Baptism and the Lord's Supper now amongst us. Agreeably to this Limitation of the Word *Moral*, with respect to Laws, Custom has obtained to limit the same Word when applied to Human Actions: That is, as those Laws only are said to be Moral which are of Eternal and Perpetual Obligation; so, in like manner, those Actions only which are done in conformity to such Laws, are said to be Moral Vertues. Thus by a *Moral Man*, we commonly mean no more, than one who lives up to the Principles of Natural Religion, in contradistinction to those who observe not only these Natural Duties, but also such Positive Precepts as are enjoined by Divine Revelation. Thus, I say, Custom has obtained; but to say the Truth, I think it a very improper way of Speaking. For though the Distinction between Moral and Positive may be allowed, with respect to Laws, yet this does not seem to afford any Foundation for a proportionable Distinction, with respect to the Actions of Men conversant about those Laws. That is, though you may absolutely confine the Notion of a Moral Law, to such Laws as are of natural and perpetual Obligation; you cannot absolutely confine the Notion of a Moral Man, to him who obeys such Laws only. The Reason is plain, *viz.* That upon supposition, that Positive Laws are enjoined, Obedience to such Laws becomes a Part of Morality, as resulting from that general and universal Principle of Morality, which has just now been mentioned; to wit, That *God is to be obeyed in every Thing which he commands*. He therefore who refuses to obey even a Positive Law, is no Moral Man; but it is not worth contending about this. Let the Distinction be allowed, and the Matter will then be plainly thus, That *Moral Virtue* signifies either, 1st. A Conformity of Mind to the Duties of Religion both Moral and Positive; or, 2dly, A Conformity of Mind to such Duties only as are of Eternal Obligation.

§. VI. THUS much being premised concerning the Nature of Moral Virtue, P. 251, we may now easily judge, how far it differs from Gospel Holiness; and plain^{252.} it is, that in the first and general Sense of Moral Virtue, there is no Difference between them. * For he that can distinguish between a *Conformity in Heart and Life to the Laws of Christ*, which is *Holiness*; and a *Conformity in Heart and Life to the Laws of RIGHT REASON*, which is *Moral Virtue*; must give up his Christianity, *i. e.* he must be obliged to say, that the Laws of Christ, and the Laws of Right Reason, are not the same Laws; or, in other Words, that Man is not bound, as a Reasonable Creature, to that Rule of Life which the Gospel proposes to him †. If the Phrase, *Moral Virtue*, be taken in the Second and more limited Sense, then indeed it is true, that Moral Virtue and Gospel Holiness are not the same; but even then the Difference will not be essential, as they say it is; for Moral Virtue will still be a Part of Holiness, because all the Duties of Morality are enjoined by the Gospel, and no Man can be a good Christian, who is not a good Moral Man. I will add, That the main of Gospel Holiness does consist in Moral Virtue; "For the Discharge of those Duties which are in their own Nature indispensable, is the most fundamental and most excellent Part of Religion, of primary Obligation, and the End of all other Religious Performances." And for this we can desire no better Authority than that of our Saviour himself, in whose account "the loving the Lord our God with all our Hearts, and our Neighbour as ourselves, is the first and the great Commandment."

§. VII. *AND now, though I think I have made it as plain as possible, that Moral Virtue, in one Sense, is a Part of Gospel Holiness; and in the other, P. 256, to one and the same Thing †; I will yet briefly take notice of those Objections,^{259.} which have been alledged to shew the contrary; * The most principal of which is drawn from the End of Human Actions, *i. e.* from those Reasons or Motives

upon which Human Actions are performed. Now it is very certain, that the Reasons or Motives upon which a Man acts, are that which constitutes the Formality, both of Moral Vertue and of Gospel Holiness, and therefore, if these be essentially different, Moral Vertue and Gospel Holiness must be so too. But this is not the Case †; For the only Difference that is pretended, is That in Gospel Holiness all Actions are performed, *with a special View, to the Glory of God in Jesus Christ*, which (say they) in Moral Vertue they are not. But this latter Part of the Assertion, is not universally true: The Glory of God in Jesus Christ, being, with respect to a Christian, an End as necessary to Moral Vertue, as it is to Gospel Obedience. * Our Actions are then directed to the Glory of God, when they are done in Obedience to his Authority, and out of a Sense, that it is our Duty so to do; for then it is that we shew our Reverence, Gratitude, and Filial Love, and, consequently, give Glory to God. We also glorify God, when we are led to Obedience by a Belief, that he will finally Reward us; for this is an Acknowledgment both of his Goodness and Sovereign Power. Finally, Our Actions are then directed to the Glory of God in Jesus Christ, when, to all these Considerations, we add those special Motives, which arise from the Redemption purchased for us by Jesus Christ. This is the only sound Sense that can be put upon this Phrase †; and who doth not see, that he who acts not upon these Principles, falls as much short of Moral Vertue, as he doth of Gospel Holiness? * Reverence and Gratitude to God, are undoubtedly Moral Duties, in which he is wanting, who doth not consider both the general and the special Motives he has to Obedience †. To glorify God in Jesus Christ, is, indeed, an End of Obedience, which Nature teaches not; but being once made known by Revelation, we are as much bound by the Principles of Morality, to regard this End, as we are those other Ends which Reason directs us to. * Further; If you consider Moral Vertue as it subsists in those who are not under the Light of the Gospel, the End will indeed differ, but not essentially; because those Motives upon which a Man in this Circumstance obeys God's Laws, are not set aside, but enforced by the Gospel. A Believer has those Motives to Obedience, which a Man under the Law of Nature only, has not; but then he wants none of those which the other has. If a good Heathen follows the Rule of Vertue, in Obedience to the Authority of God, and in Vertue of those Reasons which arise from his general Providence, a good Christian does the same; which brings the Matter to what I said just now; to wit, That Moral Vertue differs in no Sense from Gospel Holiness, any otherwise than as a part differs from the whole; for the good Heathen doth in part, that which the good Christian doth, and he doth it too in part upon the same Principles †. As to the other Objections, they are taken from the Efficient Cause, which is supposed not to be the same in Moral Vertue, as in Gospel Holiness. But this must needs be an inconclusive Way of Reasoning, because different Causes do oft-times produce Effects of the same kind. We may, however, just mention the Objections, which are these, viz. 1. "That Gospel Holiness is wrought in us by the especial Grace of God, whereas Moral Vertue is a Thing in our own Power; to which it is sufficient to answer, That Moral Vertue is not in our own Power, but by the Grace of God. 2. They say, That nothing can belong to the Nature of Holiness, which is not *the peculiar Fruit of Christ's Intercession*." * But I understand not what can be meant by being the Fruit of Christ's Intercession, unless it be, being the Effect of the Spirit, which is procured for us by Christ's Intercession, and then the Objection has already received its Answer, for indeed it is the same Objection over again.

§. VIII. I THINK it not worth the while to tarry any longer upon this Subject, which, to those who understand what Notions these Divines have, of the Nature of Moral Vertue, may perhaps seem to be a Contention merely about Words †. For so indeed it is, that they speak of Moral Vertue, as if it

it consisted in "nothing else, but the (q) Decency of outward Behaviour;" * Which, were it true, I should be ready enough to allow, that Moral Vertue is not Gospel Holiness, nor any part of it; because an outward Decency of Behaviour, abstracted from the internal Rectitude of the Will, hath indeed nothing in it that is truly good, or praise-worthy†. But this, I may venture to say, is a Notion of Vertue peculiar to themselves; much short of *Plato's*, *Aristotle's*, *Plutarch's*, or of any other Heathen Moralists who has written well concerning Manners. Indeed there is no one Thing, in the Notion whereof Men have been more generally agreed, than in that of Moral Vertue. What Variety soever there is in their Expressions of it, they all concur in this Sense, that it is (as I said before) a prevailing Inclination of the Mind to those Manners, or that Way of Life, which is best for a Reasonable Creature; or an universal Goodness of Manners, both in Mind and in Practice." To affirm, therefore, that Moral Vertue doth not belong to the Nature of Holiness, will, I doubt, sound in the Ears of most Men, as if they might be good Christians without the Vertues, even, of a good Heathen. * For which Reason (if there had been no other for it) it was proper to take this notice of it, and to shew the true Difference that is between them. But there is another Reason which made it still more necessary; and that is, that when you have set them right in the Notion of Moral Vertue, it will still be true according to their Principles, that it hath nothing to do with Holiness. Put the Case, if you please, of one who believes in Christ, loves and fears God, and in consequence hereof, yields a sincere and hearty Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel. This, I hope, is more than outward Decency of Behaviour. Now does such a Behaviour as this belong to the Nature of Holiness, or does it not? Why no, it doth not, if what they say be true; for according to their Notions, Holiness may subsist without it. You have already seen, that Holiness, in their account, consists in having certain supernatural Habits infused into the Soul, which Habits, as has afore been observed, are so far from implying a constant and regular Disposition of the Mind to vertuous Actions, that they may subsist under a State of the most heinous and deliberate Wickedness. This is farther plain from what they teach concerning the Connexion there is between Holiness and Justification, which they say (and very truly) cannot be separated the one from the other. But how do they explain this? By denying that actual Wickedness is consistent with a Justified State? No such Matter, they tell us plainly, that (r) a wicked Man, whilst he is such, may be justified; yet, say they, he is holy, because he hath remaining in him the Habit of Holiness. They separate Holiness, therefore, from Moral Vertue in its true and largest Sense, even when it becomes Christian Obedience; and the bottom of the whole is this, that let a Man live never so wickedly, he may yet be a holy Man. A Notion which doth so much confound the common Use of Words, and so flatly contradict what the Holy Scriptures every where teach, that I need not be at the pains to refute it.†

(q) Thus Dr. Owen, and thus also Mr. Turretin. *Moralia quibusdam dicuntur (opera) quæ quoad externam Disciplinam, seu actum externum, quam Substantiam vulgò vocant, talia sunt. Loc. 17. Quæst. 4. §. 1. And he gives us a very broad Hint, that this was his own Notion, by denying universally, that the Vertues of the Heathens were good Works, for this Reason, because (as he pretends) they wanted the inward Obedience of the Heart.*

(r) Licet fidelis justificatus in varia indicat peccata — non sequitur sanctificationem ipsam divelli à justificatione; quia si sanctificatio actualis tollatur, non tamen habitualis — qui peccat non sanctè agit, sed potest tamen qui sanctitatis actum non exierit habere sanctitatis habitum in se manentem. *Id. Ibid. Quæst. 1. §. 21.*



*DISCOURSE IV.

O F

FERVENCY IN PRAYER,

AND OF THE

Work of the SPIRIT in Relation to it.

§. I. **T**HAT it is through the Assistance of the Spirit, that we are enabled to pray acceptably, is a Point universally acknowledged by all Christians, those only excepted, who throwing the Work of his Grace intirely out of their Divinity, resolve every Thing into the mere natural Abilities of Men. And the Thing in general is not to be denied ; For since the Efficacy of our Prayers depends upon those Vertuous Dispositions, which are required as necessary to prepare and qualify us for the right Performance of this Duty, and since these Dispositions, whatever they be, are all of them the Effect of the Divine Grace, that we pray acceptably, must needs be referred to the Spirit, as to the prime and principal Cause. But this Account, I conceive, does not reach the whole of what is commonly intended. For when they speak of the Assistance of the Spirit in Prayer, most Men seem to mean, not that Influence of the Holy Ghost, by which, in the general Course of our Lives, we are disposed to Vertue, but some peculiar Act or Operation upon the Soul, which the Spirit is supposed to exert at the very Instant of Prayer. This is most remarkably true of those who pretend, that the Matter, and even the very Words of our Prayers, must be of the Spirit's inditing, which Conceit having been already refuted, there is no need for me to say any Thing to it here. But many, who do not run into this degree of Extravagancy, seem nevertheless to be of Opinion, that the Spirit does, by a peculiar Act, inspire into us that Fervency of Mind, in which the Life and Vigour of true Devotion doth consist. Now though this Notion hath nothing in it, which is in any wise unworthy of the Majesty of God, but carries with it rather a great Appearance of Piety ; yet because it may be, and I am persuaded has been, the Occasion of dangerous Scruples in good Men, who have hereby been led to think a great deal worse of themselves, than they have deserved, I think it very proper to go to the Bottom of it, and see how much of it may be true, and how much is not so ; And the Method which most readily offers it self to me, is this, *viz.* 1. To shew, What it is to pray fervently. 2. To inquire, Whether Fervency is necessary to render our Prayers acceptable ; and what Degree of it will be sufficient. 3. To consider, How far we have

reason

reason to believe, that the Spirit excites us to Fervency, by any Act or Operation distinct from that Influence, which he vouchsafes in the ordinary Course of our Lives, to enable us to become good.

§. II. I BEGIN with the first of these, What it is to pray fervently; and this is a Point which will require no long Discussion. For the Word Fervency, in its proper Original Import, signifies *Heat* or *Warmth*, and when by a Metaphor it is applied to the Mind, denotes the Briskness or Vehemency of some of its Passions, which is very fitly and properly resembled to the Heat of Natural Bodies. To pray with Fervency, therefore, implies neither more nor less, than to pray with Earnestness, *i. e.* with a vehement Desire of obtaining what we ask for; which is a Thing so very plain and obvious, that 'tis surprizing to me, how any should be so far imposed upon, as to measure the Fervency either of their own, or of others Devotions, by what they see with their Eyes, or hear with their Ears; and that it should be thought a Token of the Spirit, when a Man sighs and groans out his Prayers, speaks loud and dismal, uses warm and passionate Expressions, and wrings his Body into various and uncommon Postures. The Seat of Prayer is the Heart, and there also is the Seat of Fervency. Now the Heart may be very cold, when the Tongue is most warm and affectionate; The Desires may be low and groveling, when the Voice is most elevated; and the Affections indolent and unmoved, when the Body is most of all in Motion. In short, as these, and such like Circumstances, are often present where true Devotion is not; so they are as often wanting where it is; They are Things, which Art can easily effect, and which Nature does not always produce. But wheresoever they are, and whence-soever they proceed, they are, with respect to Prayer, purely accidental, and, therefore, indifferent, so that what St. Paul hath said upon another Occasion, is also applicable here; *Bodily Exercise profiteth little, for neither if we use it, are we the better, nor if we use it not, are we the worse.* The same Thing may be said of Weeping, which though in some it may be the usual Concomitant of inward Distress, yet it is not so in all. For this depends in a great measure upon Constitution, which is not in all Persons, nor in the same Person at all Times, disposed to be alike affected by the same degrees of Passion. As, therefore, we must not measure either the Greatness, or the Reality of any Worldly Sorrow, by the Number of our Tears, so neither must we, the Fervency of our Devotion; considering, that the Heart may swell and boil within, though the Sluices without be stopped up, and that Grief is not the less clamorous for being silent.

§. III. THUS much I thought it needful to observe, in order to guard against some common Mistakes. I now proceed to inquire, Secondly, Whether Fervency is necessary to render our Prayers acceptable; and what Degree of it will be sufficient. Now as to the first Branch of this Inquiry, *viz.* Whether Fervency be at all necessary; we cannot (I think) in the least doubt, which way it must be answered, when we consider those frequent Recommendations, which are given of it in Scripture. St. Paul desires the Romans, *συναγωνίζεσθαι ἐν ταῖς δεσευχαῖς*, that they would *strive or contend with him in their Prayers unto God*, Rom. xv. 30. Now we may be said to *strive* in Prayer, either with regard to one single Act of the Mind, or with regard to many. With regard to one single Act of the Mind, we may be said to strive in Prayer, when we desire a Thing with much Passion and Earnestness, or, which is all one, with Fervency; and thus our Translators have rendered the Phrase, *Colos. iv. 12.* Where we read of *Epaphras*, that he was *ἀγωνίζομενος ἐν ταῖς δεσευχαῖς*, *labouring fervently in Prayers.* With respect to many Acts of the Mind, we may be said to strive in Prayer, when we desire a Thing, not only with Earnestness or Fervency, but frequently, *i. e.* with much Importunity. But though the Phrase, in a rational Construction, will bear this latter Interpretation, yet the Scripture

Usage limits it particularly to the former, as seems plain from the Place in the *Colossians* above-cited, where we may observe, that the Importunity of *Epaphras* is expressed by a distinct Term. He was not only ἀγωνίζομενος, but he was πάντοτε ἀγωνίζομενος, where the ἀγωνίζομενος, denotes the Fervency, and the πάντοτε the Frequency of his Prayers, as it doth also *Luke* xviii. 1. In truth, Frequency in Prayer is every where described in the Sacred Writings, by the Phrase of *praying always*, or some other Phrase equivalent to it, as προσεύχεσθαι ἐν παντί καὶ ὡς, ἀδιαλείπτως, νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας, and the like. However this be, thus much is certain, that ἀγωνίζεσθαι ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς, does at least imply Fervency, or an earnest Desire of obtaining what we ask for. For as a Man could not be said ἀγωνίζεσθαι, to combat, or contend with another, who should only lift up a Hand or a Finger, though he should do it never so frequently; so let a Man offer up never so many Prayers to God, he cannot be said ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς ἀγωνίζεσθαι, to strive or contend in Prayer, if he does it after a cold, indifferent Manner. The Word indeed carries with it the Idea of Labour and Vehemency; whence it is, that we say of those who are under any Excess of Pain or Sorrow, that they are ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ in an Agony, because of that Labour and Conflict which the Soul feels upon those Occasions. There are a Variety of other Words, by which the same Thing is expressed; such as βοᾶν, to cry aloud, which is the property of those who desire to be heard, προσεύχειν ἐν τενέᾳ, to pray intensely, which in the old Testament is called, the pouring out of the Heart, the seeking God with the whole Heart, or with the whole Desire. But it would be endless to mention Particulars, nor need we lay together the whole Authority of Scripture, in a Case which is so plainly determined by the very Reason of the Thing. The Opposite to Fervency, is, as I just now hinted, Coldness and Indifferency; and surely, there can be little Reason for a Man to expect, that God should be ready to listen to those Prayers, which he himself is under no concern whether he will hear or not. To be indifferent in Prayer, is a sure Sign, that we are not under a just Sense, how much it is for our Interest, to have God for our Friend, because Men are naturally and unavoidably led to be solicitous after that which they judge to be of Consequence to the Happiness of their Condition. And whence can such a Temper as this proceed, but either from a careless Stupidity, which makes us unaffected with that which most nearly concerns us, or (what is worse) from a vain and wicked Conceit of our own Self-sufficiency, which causes us to attribute both what we have, and what we hope for, less to the Providence of God, than to our-selves. Take it under which View you please, and it will be plain, that a Person thus disposed, is a very improper Object of the Divine Favour; He hath no Merit at present; He giveth no Encouragement, by the Prospect of any good Use that he is like to make of it afterwards. The End which God proposes in dispensing his Blessings, is, that he may lead us to Obedience. He supplies our Wants, that he may ingage our Gratitude by his Beneficence. But Gratitude always supposeth a Sense of the Benefit received; and the Return on the one side can never be great; where the Merit on the other is conceived to be but little. It would be easy for me to enlarge upon this Subject; but I content my self with these short Hints, and shall only add, That what I now say, I would have understood of those only, who are habituated to a lazy, unaffectionate manner of Praying. For, as I am far from thinking, that every wandring in Devotion, implies so much Evil in its Cause, so I must not affirm it to be the same in its Effects and Consequences. The very best of Men do sometimes (and, God knows, too often) feel themselves interrupted in their most solemn Addresses; which arises not from any Slight that they put upon the Divine Favour, but from the Weakness of our common Nature, which will not permit us constantly to attend to those things with which generally, and in the main, we are most deeply affected. The Pleasures, the Cares, the Business of this Life, all of them claim one considerable Share of our Thoughts, and will surprize us now and then when they ought to be farthest from us.

And

And therefore, let no Man be so rigid and severe with himself, nor think so hardly of God, as to conclude, upon every such Accident as this, that he wants the Spirit, and that he prays unworthily. For what we cannot help, God will certainly overlook, and the Spirit is given to correct our Infirmities indeed, but not to extirpate them. He makes us better Men, but he doth not change us from Men into Angels.

§. IV. HAVING shewn you in general, that Fervency is necessary to render our Prayers acceptable; I proceed, in the next Place, to consider what Degree of it will be sufficient: And here, not to descend to the lowest Degree of Sufficiency (which, perhaps, it may be a hard matter exactly to determine) I shall content my self with laying down this general Rule, *viz.* That that Degree of Earnestness will certainly be sufficient to render our Prayers acceptable, which is natural to the ordinary Temper and Disposition of a good Man, when he seriously considers of his own Wants; and that, therefore, we are not to infer, that we are destitute of the Spirit, because we are not carried away with sudden and violent Raptures, or because our Prayers are not attended with an Accession of Vehemency which we do not feel upon any other Occasion. The Scripture has no where determined the exact Measure of Devotion; it no where tells us, that our Prayers will not be heard, unless our Minds be wrought up into extraordinary and uncommon Emotions; And what Reason can possibly be assigned, from the Nature of the Thing, to shew, that God will not be ready to answer the Requests of those, who apply to him under a due Sense of their own Wants, and of the Dependency they have upon him? Give me leave to add, That Prayer being a standing and ordinary Duty, the Essence of it must therefore, be so defined, as that Men may be ordinarily qualified for the right Performance of it. But this they cannot be, upon Supposition that any new and unusual Vehemency be of absolute Necessity; For the Desire is not so far under the Power of the Will, as that we can raise it higher when we please; especially, when the Mind (as is now supposed) is already duly apprized of the Weight and Importance of the Thing desired. Ecstasy and Transport, has a very great Dependance upon the Bodily Dispositions of Men, to the exciting whereof, some peculiar external Circumstances may be necessary, which do not every Day occur; and consequently, can never be certain, either as to all Persons, or to the same Person at all Times, wherein it is yet very requisite and fitting, that he should pray. I am persuaded, I say no more upon this Point, than what all Christians do more or less find to be true, by their own Experience, which plainly enough shews, that an Accession of Vehemency, beyond what is natural to the ordinary Temper and Disposition of a good Man, cannot be essential to true Devotion. But I will not go so far as to say, that Devotion is any thing at all the worse for it: I will not (as a certain * eminent Writer has done of late) give it as a Prescription, that Prayer ought to be calm and undisturb'd; because, I can very easily understand, that what is not essential to any thing, may yet contribute towards the Perfection of it; and because I verily believe, that with how much the more Earnestness (or, if you please, *Heat and Flame*) a Man offers up his Prayers, upon Supposition, that all other Circumstances are as they ought to be, they will be answered so much the more effectually. I have not in general so bad an Opinion of the Passions of the Soul, as to think that they are either evil in themselves, or that they must needs cast a Blot and a Stain, whensoever they mix themselves in our religious Performances: Nature hath implanted them in us, for great and excellent Ends, and if they are fix'd upon a proper Object, they do, in Proportion to the Intensity wherewith they are exercised, both argue an excellent Disposition, and lead to noble Attainments. Thus, in the Case now

* Bp. of Bangor.

before us, greater Earnestness in Prayer, argues a quicker Sense of our Wants, and stronger and more lively Apprehensions of the All-sufficiency of that God to whom we apply our selves for Relief; which Disposition of Mind, the more perfect it is, it must be so much the more attractive of the Divine Compassion: Our Devotion, therefore, must be by so much the more perfect, by how much it is the more ardent and affectionate; yet still I say, that the lowest Degree of Earnestness, which is consistent with the Temper of a good Man, shall be accepted, though not with the same Success, yet with a Success proportionable to its Worth and Excellency: and to say otherwise, is in Effect to say, that a Man may be a good Man, and yet not fit to pray, which is a Contradiction both to the Word of God, and to the common Sense and Reason of Mankind.

§. V. THIS Foundation being laid, we need only to consider, with what Degree of Earnestness a Man ought ordinarily to desire the Supply of his Needs, in order to know more particularly with what Degree of Earnestness, it will be sufficient for us to pray; and this Point will admit of a different Determination, according to the Diversity of Objects about which our Desires may be conversant: As Man is compounded of a Soul and a Body; his Wants must have a Relation to both, and since God is the Sovereign Disposer of all good Things, both those which relate to this Life, and those which relate to a Life to come, 'tis plain that the one as well as the other, ought to be the Subject of our Prayers. But then, since it is also plain, that the Earnestness wherewith we desire a thing, should be in some Measure at least proportionable to its Value, the Consequence is, that we must not desire temporal Things with the same Degree of Earnestness, wherewith we desire Spiritual, because the latter are infinitely more valuable than the former. With respect therefore to our Desire of temporal things, 'tis evident, that we may err in the Excess; and in general, I believe, it will be admitted as a true Rule, that by how much the less earnest we are about them, by so much the more perfect will our Condition be. Not that we are to be absolutely indifferent towards them, for this I take to be impossible; and the Scripture supposes some sort of Earnestness, when it teaches us to pray for them. But forasmuch as we know not, whether these Things will be profitable or hurtful to us, this Earnestness must always be moderated with Submission to the Divine Will, whether he will grant them or not; and the more it is thus moderated, *i. e.* the more firmly and cheerfully we repose our selves upon his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, and the less we *lean to our own Understandings*, the more acceptable must we be in his Sight. And must not our Earnestness after Spiritual Things, be moderated also by a Submission to the Divine Will? I answer; Not for this Reason, Because we know not whether they will be profitable for us; for we are sure they must always be so; But then a great Difference must be made in this Case between Things only Profitable, and such as are necessary to qualify us for the Kingdom of Heaven. With respect to the latter, there is no room for this Distinction, because we are sure it is his Will, that all should be so qualified. But as to the former, since for wise Reasons he doth not bestow them to all alike, but in different Degrees and Proportions to different Persons, according to his Good Will and Pleasure, here also must be the same Submission to the Will of God, as with respect to Temporal Things. If I, who am already qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven, see another Man better qualified, *i. e.* under higher Degrees of Improvement, than my self, I am not to infer, that God will enable me to attain to the same State of Perfection, if I labour after it. If I desire it, therefore, (as indeed I must, and ought to do) yet it must be under this Reserve, *If God in his Wisdom, shall see it proper* to grant it me. But the Case is not the same with respect to Things necessary; for these, I am sure, God is ready to grant; These, therefore, we cannot desire with too much Importunity. But the great Difficulty will be, to determine what is enough

enough, or to define what Degree of Earnestness after Spiritual Things, is essentially necessary to the Temper or Disposition of a good Man: Shall we say, that Spiritual Things ought to be desired by so much the more earnestly than Temporal, by how much they are of greater Value? I fear we must not. For then our Desires after temporal Things must bear no Proportion to our Desires after Spiritual, because there is no Proportion between the Excellency of the one, and the Excellency of the other. But where is that Saint now upon Earth, in whom the Love of God, and of a Life to come, burns with so pure a Flame? Who is there, that does not find his best Desires, allay'd by a considerable Intermixture of this World? Nay, who is there, that upon many Occasions, does not find his Affections so much clogg'd with the Weight of Sensual Appetite, that it is with some Difficulty that he can cast the Scale on the Side of Heaven? In Truth, to desire Spiritual Things, with an Earnestness justly commensurate to their intrinsick Value, is impossible, so long as we are in this frail and mortal Estate; because that Spiritual Happiness which we look for in another World, which is the End and Completion of all Spiritual Attainments, is not distinctly and experimentally known to us. We know, indeed, that it shall be very great, yea, infinitely greater than the most refined Happiness that this World affords; but *we walk by Faith, and not by Sight*: We have no particular and sensible Knowledge what it is, and therefore, cannot be proportionably so much affected with it, as we are by these Earthly Things which are near at Hand; which we see in all their Glory; which we taste and feel without Abatement. My Way of Thinking, therefore, in this Case, is plainly this, That such a Degree of Earnestness after Spiritual Things, as, with the Divine Grace and Blessing, is sufficient to lead us to Obedience to the Will of God, is as much as is ordinarily and necessarily required from us; which I hope will not be disputed; because, if it be said, that any higher Degree is necessary; it must also be said, that Obedience to God's Will is not sufficient to qualify us for Salvation. The Kingdom of Heaven is proposed to us only as a Motive to Obedience; wherefore, if our Desires after this Kingdom, and the Things pertaining to it, be so great as effectually to lead us to the keeping of God's Commandments, this Motive has had its proper Effect; and, consequently, any farther Degrees, though they must always contribute to the Perfection of Holiness, cannot be of strict and absolute Necessity.

§. VI. Now, therefore, I think we may come to a full and plain Determination of the Point before us. For since, as has been shewn, that same Degree of Earnestness, which is natural to the ordinary Temper and Disposition of a good Man, will be sufficient to render his Prayers acceptable, and since every good Man must be supposed to desire Temporal Things under an intire Submission to the Divine Will, and Spiritual Things with such an Earnestness, as will effectually lead him to Obedience; 'tis evident, that he, who, thus disposed, shall address himself to God by Prayer, must pray with a true and acceptable Devotion: So that the great Criterion by which we are to judge of our Prayers, is, The general Course of our Behaviour; which will thus far be a certain Rule to us, that if we find our selves able to overcome Sin, and follow after Righteousness, we need not doubt but that those Prayers which with Seriousness and Affection we have daily put up to the Throne of Grace, have found a gracious and a merciful Reception, and that the like Success will always attend upon the like Endeavours. But if, on the other Hand, we feel our selves in no Condition to bear up against Temptation, but ready to yield and give way to the Force of every predominant Lust, 'tis as plain, that our Desires after Heaven, and Heavenly Things, want much of that Warmth and Vigour, which it is fitting and necessary for them to have, and, consequently, that whatever uncommon Emotions we may suffer whilst we are praying, they are the Effect of other Causes, and not of true Devotion. It is, therefore, absurd to suppose of a truly good Man, that he may want the Spirit of Prayer,

or that Grace of the Spirit by which he is enabled to pray with sufficient Fervency of Devotion. Such a one, when he prays, *i. e.* when with Seriousness and Attention of Mind, he offers up his Requests to God; cannot be without true Devotion, nor, consequently, without that Grace of the Spirit which is necessary to true Devotion. I will beg leave to carry the Point somewhat farther; and to say, that an acceptable Devotion may subsist in those who at present fall short of that Goodness which is necessary to qualify them for the Kingdom of Heaven. For, Prayer is one of those means by which we must obtain that Grace which qualifies us for the Kingdom of Heaven; which supposes, that we may be qualified to pray acceptably, antecedently to our being qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven. And, therefore, I cannot in the least doubt, but that every Degree of Earnestness in Prayer, is acceptable to God, which is proportionable to the Advancement which a Man makes, when once he has made a good Beginning, and is daily going forward in the Way of Righteousness. But this is a Point which I shall not any farther enter into; my main Business at present, being to administer some Comfort to those truly good, but weak Men; who though they have no wilful Miscarriage to charge upon themselves, are perpetually finding Fault with their Prayers, and filling themselves with endless and tormenting Scruples lest they should not have the Spirit, because (as I said before) at the Instant of Devotion, they do not find themselves surprized by sudden and unusual Raptures. A Man should never question the Goodness of his Prayers, at least, 'till he knows how to question the Integrity and Uprightness of his Conduct; If the Matter of them be but as it ought, the Manner of them can never be amiss, so long as it proceeds from an honest and a good Heart, of which, methinks, it should be enough to convince us, that we feel the good Effects of them in our selves. But though I am desirous to remove all needless Jealousies on the one Hand, I would by no means lay a Stumbling-Block in the way to any good Improvements on the other: And, therefore, let me once more observe, That as with respect to Spiritual Things, every Degree of Earnestness (within those Limitations above set down) will add to the Perfection of our general Estate; so it will also to the Perfection of our Devotions. If, therefore, by daily Meditation, by Fasting and Self-denial, or by any other means, we can quicken our Apprehensions of the Excellency of a Life to come, and mortify our Affections more and more to this present World, we should not neglect to make the best use we are able of those Advantages. For, the more earnest are our Desires, the greater is our present Distress, and the greater our Distress is, the more thankful shall we be when our Wants are relieved, which cannot fail of bringing down the most plentiful Supplies from that merciful Being, who is always compassionate to the Afflicted, and most liberally bestows his Favours upon those who will most thankfully receive them.

§. VII. ONE Point only now remains, which I hope will be dispatched in a very few Words, and that is to consider, Thirdly, How far we have Reason to believe, that the Spirit excites us to Fervency of Devotion by any Act or Operation distinct from that Influence which he vouchsafes in the ordinary Course of our Lives; concerning which Point, because the Scriptures are wholly silent, *i. e.* no where make any direct or express Mention of any such Operation, we must, therefore, proceed with the more Caution in the Resolution of it; and I think we shall not exceed our Measure, if we lay down the following Rules, *viz.* 1st, That as to that Degree of Fervency which is of absolute Necessity to render our Prayers acceptable to God, this being at most no greater than what is natural to the Ordinary Temper and Disposition of a good Man, we can have no Reason to ascribe this to any Act or Operation which the Spirit vouchsafes us at the Instant of Prayer. For the Spirit is given for such Ends and Purposes only as are needful, and it is plain, that no new Operation can be needful for the producing this Effect, because the Spirit hath already

ready prepared us for it, by leading us to Goodness. 2dly, As to those Transports, which good Christians may sometimes feel in their Devotions, above what is natural to their ordinary Disposition, I do not think that we are presently to infer that even these are the Effect of any new Operation; and that because they may possibly be the Effect of other Causes. They may be excited by some sudden and natural Change in ourselves, or they may be occasion'd by some external accidental Circumstances, which work upon the Passions, and give us more lively Images and Apprehensions of Things; which is a Case, that, perhaps, may not rarely be observed by an Attentive Mind. But then, 3dly, I durst not take upon me to say, that the Holy Spirit doth never by any new or distinct Operation at the Instant of Prayer, excite us to greater Fervency, because the Possibility of its being the Effect of other Causes, doth not exclude this one, and because 'tis not unreasonable to suppose, that he may sometimes do it, though he hath no where particularly promised it. 'Tis very reasonable to believe, that the Spirit dispenses his Graces at such Times as Men are in the best Disposition to receive them; and, for ought that we can tell to the contrary, a Holy Motion may be able to make stronger and more lasting Impressions upon a Heart soften'd and made pliable by the Warmth of Devotion, than it could do under a natural and more equal Temperature. But in this, I will not venture to define peremptorily, because, I know not the Nature and Constitution of Man, nor the particular Manner of the Spirit's Operations; and after all, 'tis possible, that the Spirit may no otherwise excite us to greater Degrees of Fervency, than antecedently, by a general and familiar Improvement of those Christian Graces which are the original Source and Fountain of true Devotion. If any one should believe this, I see not what Reason he would have to think the worse of his Prayers; but if he believes, that the Spirit comes upon him by sudden and violent Snatches, let him take care, that his Belief does not degenerate into a dangerous Enthusiasm; which is the Case when Men are led to despise all Evenness and Sedateness in Prayer, and especially, if, ascribing all Heat in Devotion to a Divine Impulse, they look upon it as a sure Evidence and Token of the Divine Will, and are thereby led (which I fear has sometimes happened) to pursue or engage themselves in such Methods, as otherwise, perhaps, they could not have approved.

HEMPTON-ABBAY in NORFOLK,

S P E A K E R.

WITH SOME REMARKS THEREUPON.

By H. E. O., M. A.



Written in the year, 1714.

A SHORT AND TRUE
A C C O U N T
O F A
C O N F E R E N C E
H E L D A T A
Q U A K E R S M E E T I N G - H O U S E ,
O N T H E S U B J E C T O F
W A T E R - B A P T I S M ,
W I T H
J O S E P H M I D D L E T O N
O F
H E M P T O N - A B B E Y I N N O R F O L K ,
S P E A K E R .

W I T H S O M E R E M A R K S T H E R E U P O N .

By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.

Written in the Year, 1714.

A SHORT AND TRUE
ACCOUNT
OF A
CONFERENCE
HELD AT A
QUAKERS MEETING-HOUSE,
ON THE SUBJECT OF
WATER-BAPTISM,
WITH
JOSEPH MIDDLETON
OF
Hempton-Abbey in Norfolk,
SPEAKER
WITH SOME REMARKS THEREUPON.

By HENRY STEBBING, M.A.

Written in the Year, 1714

T H E
P R E F A C E.

IT will be thought, I hope, a sufficient Apology for my publishing these Papers, if I acquaint the Reader, that it is done purely in my own Vindication, and for the Satisfaction of those (particularly those of my own Parish) who were present at this Conference. I never believ'd that any Thing would be offer'd on either Side, that might be worthy the Publick Notice; and was therefore desirous, that as the Debate was designed only for the Benefit of a few, the knowledge of it might reach only to a few. That it has happen'd otherwise, is intirely owing to the Quakers, who being big with the Expectation of some wonderful Performances from their mighty Champion, as they did not scruple to promise themselves the Title of Conquerors, even before the Encounter, so they have not been backward to proclaim themselves such afterwards.

To those who shall ask a Reason why I enter'd into this Dispute, I have thus much to say; That having some (though, God be thanked, not a great many) Quakers within my Parish, I thought I should not be able to discharge my Conscience before God, if I did not endeavour, to the utmost of my Power, to recover them from their Errors. To this Purpose I have frequently discours'd to some of them in private, and have offer'd a great many Arguments against their Principles, which they have not been able to answer: But this has had but little Effect upon them. They suspected, that the Weight of my Reasonings, was owing rather to the Advantage of Learning and Art, than of Truth on my Side; and would often tell me, that although they being illiterate, were not capable of satisfying my Objections, yet they doubted not but that there were others of their Persuasion that could, and seem'd to wish that I would undertake some of greater Abilities than themselves.

This seem'd, to make it necessary that I should take Occasion, at some Time or other, to discourse with some of the principal Leaders of that Sect; especially since, (generally) once in about a Month or six Weeks, there was a Meeting held in my Parish, in the House of Jonathan

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The P R E F A C E.

than Symonds, to which, not only professed Quakers but, divers others of the Inhabitants also (some out of Curiosity, and others through an ill placed Devotion) used to resort. This I thought might be of ill Consequence; and the Danger was so much the greater, upon the Account of the great Zeal and Diligence of this Jonathan Symonds and his Family, who seldom or never fail'd before every Meeting, to give Notice of it from House to House, throughout the Parish; and had (not long since) seduced a very honest well meaning Person, who constantly came to Church and had been partaker of the holy Communion, over to their Persuasion. I hoped therefore that it might be of some use to exert my self on this Occasion; if not to the conviction of the Quakers themselves, yet to the confirming the Minds of those who were not already touch'd with the Poyson of that Heresy, and the preserving those who had some Sort of Liking to, and were leaning that Way, from any farther Infection.

This was the Reason of my entering first into this Debate; How many may be disposed, to listen to the Representation which the Quakers have given of it I cannot tell; And I am apt to believe, that many of those who were present, were not able to follow the Series of the Arguments so closely as to see the full Force and Evidence of them. I thought fit therefore to publish this plain and true Account of the whole, in which though I pretend not that the Points between us are amply and compleatly discuss'd; yet I hope I have given a Specimen of the Weakness of those Arguments by which the Quakers endeavour to maintain their Principles, and shewn, that they have little Reason to boast themselves of their Performances. But this I must submit to the Reader's Judgment.

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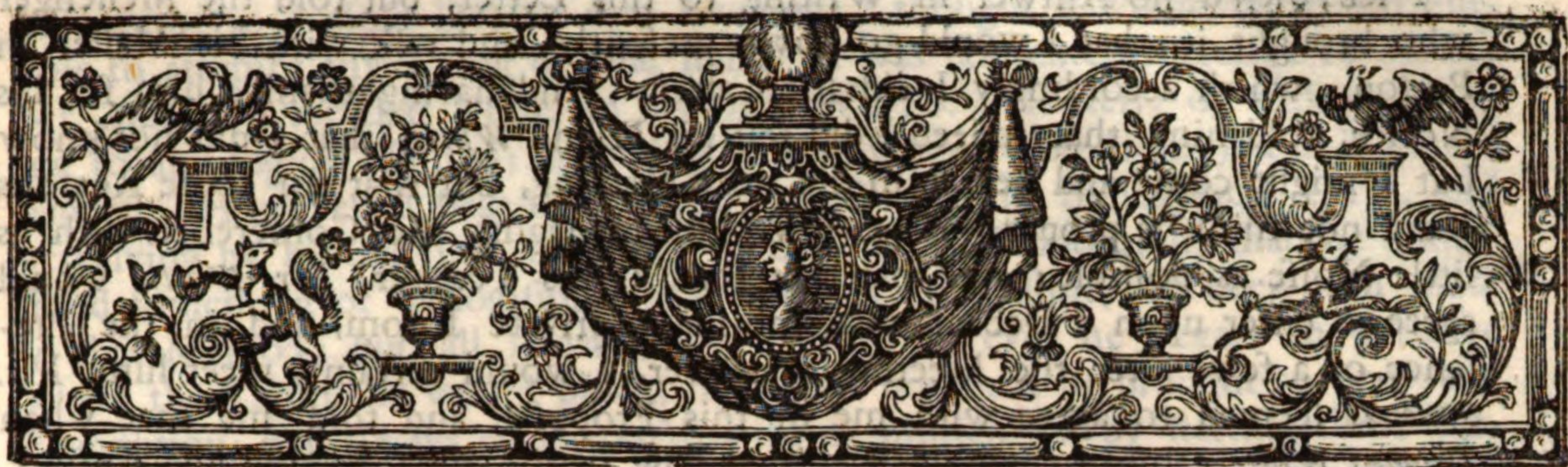
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AN ACCOUNT



A SHORT AND TRUE ACCOUNT, &c.

BEFORE I enter upon the Particulars of this Conference, it will not be amiss to touch upon some few Things which opened the way to it.

Observing one Day, a considerable Number of Quakers going towards Mr. Symonds's, I suspected there would be a Meeting there that Afternoon. To satisfy my self about this, I went down; and hearing the Speaker very loud, stay'd a while at some Distance from the House, till the Assembly was broke up. The Master of the House, who had been inform'd of my being there, came to me, and very civilly invited me in, where I found the Teacher, one *Thomas White*, (a Person of great Repute among them) together with a considerable Number of other Quakers, who had placed themselves round the Room. Friend, said I to *White*, I am the Minister of this Parish, and desire to be inform'd, by what Authority you exercise the Office of a publick Teacher. In my Opinion, Sir, You have no Authority; and I do here in the presence of this Assembly invite you to a Debate. But though I urged this several times, I could obtain no other answer from him than that *I was a Young Man*, and that as to himself *he was no Disputant*; whereupon I took my Leave of him, and said, as I was going out, Friend, since thou wilt say nothing to me, I cannot tell but that the next Time thou hast a Meeting here, I may come and hear what thou ha'st to say to thy Congregation.

ABOUT three Weeks after, it was nois'd abroad among the Quakers, that there was to be a Meeting again at *Jonathan Symonds's*, and that I was to be there to hear them preach, and afterwards to oppose them. I gave no great Heed to this, supposing it might be no more than Rumour. But about a Week after, I receiv'd a Letter from Mr. *Symonds*, which I shall here set down verbatim.

Friend Stebbing.

THomas White who had a Meeting at my House when thou came, intend to have a Meeting God willing at my House again to Morrow about one or two at longest of the Clock in the Afternoon. I thought fit to let the know it because I heard thou should say thou would come and hear him so thou may judge of his Doctrine with Love I am

Thy reall Friend

Jonathan Symonds.

The 11th of the 3d Month. 1714.

An ACCOUNT of a CONFERENCE

I RETURN'd no Answer in Writing to this Letter, but told the Messenger who brought it, that I would go down presently, and talk with his Master in Person; which accordingly I did soon after. And having thank'd him for his Notice, told him, that indeed I did tell his Friend *White*, that I did not know but I might come and hear him the next Meeting, but that for some Reasons I did not think it proper. That I was for managing the Conference with as little Noise as possible; and that therefore, if his Teacher, Mr. *White*, would agree to enter upon a Debate with me in a private Room, and in the Presence of a few, after the Meeting was over, I would certainly meet him. Mr. *Symonds* seem'd to agree with me in this Proposal, and told me that when *Thomas White* came, he would let him know of it, and send me his Answer. Accordingly, the next Morning I receiv'd the following Note.

Friend Stebbing.

I*F thou please to come down to my House, my Friends will be glad to see thee: to hear what thou hast to charge them with, and sit time and place to dispute or defend themselves, with Love I am*

Thy Friend

12. 3d Month. 1714.

Jonathan Symonds.

PURSUANT to this Invitation I went down to Mr. *Symonds's*, sometime in the Afternoon having first received advice that their Meeting was ended. And was met at the Door by Mr. *White* and another Person whom I knew not; but found afterwards to be one *Joseph Middleton* (another Speaker) who addressing himself to me said "That he knew nothing at all of the intended Conference, and was going farther that Night, and so could not stay to dispute with me: That if I would fix upon some Preliminaries, he would at his Return from *London*, (for thither it seems he was going, it being the Week before *Whitsuntide*) undertake the Controversy. And this he urg'd was but reasonable, since he being Respondent, ought to have some Time to prepare himself." Friend, (reply'd I) you are a Person whom I did not expect to meet here, your Brother *White* being the Man to whom the Challenge was given. But since it is your Pleasure I shall not refuse you, and you may take what time you think fit to prepare your self. Yet forasmuch as I have been attending your Motions all this Day, methinks I would willingly have a Word or two with you before we part. But *Joseph* was for shifting of the Debate till some other Time, saying, that he had several Miles to ride that Evening, and therefore could not stay; however, being urg'd by some of his Friends, we went both of us into the Parlour. And I began with laying my Charge against Mr. *Middleton*, which was this, *viz.*

That he and all the Teachers of his Sect are False and Heretical Teachers.

To make good this Charge, I alledg'd, that whatever Teacher does maintain such Doctrines as are contrary to the Doctrines of Christianity, as they are deliver'd to us in Holy Scripture, is False and Heretical. This was granted, and it was put upon me to shew that the Quakers do maintain any such Doctrines. Here therefore I instanc'd in one particular Thing which the Scripture has made necessary to Salvation, and which the Quakers do universally oppose, *viz.* Baptism with Water. Mr. *Middleton* acknowledg'd, that the Quakers do oppose the Necessity of Water-Baptism, but deny'd that it was ever instituted or commanded by Christ.

It is here to be observ'd, that I was then prepar'd with an Amanuensis, who was to take down in Writing so much of the Arguments and Answers

on

on both Sides as was necessary. But perceiving that there was no Likelihood of coming to a close Debate that Evening, I thought it would be to no Purpose to attempt any Thing of that Kind. I was contented therefore to oppose Mr. *Middleton* for that Time, in his own Way, *i. e.* loosely, or without sticking to any logical Method; objecting, and answering Objections, just as it should happen. However, I began to argue against him in Syllogistical Form, and perceiving by his denying the Major or the Minor Proposition, that he understood something of Syllogism, I was resolv'd, if possible, to keep him close to that Method; but all in vain, for as soon as ever he began to perceive where the Argument would pinch, he would not then be brought to deny any Proposition, but always endeavour'd to bring himself off by starting some Objection or other, foreign to the Point in Hand. I saw plainly, that this Method of Disputing, would never bring us to any Conclusion, and therefore resolv'd with my self, that the next Time I talk'd with him, I would make Use of an *Amanuensis*, and make him, if possible, give a direct Answer to every Syllogism. But this was not to be attempted now. Mr. *Middleton* was in haste; and after we had discours'd about an Hour, began to call for his Horse. I then thought it was Time to take my Leave of him, which accordingly I did; telling him, that if he would let me know when he came this Way again, I would discourse farther with him. He promis'd me to do so, and told me withal, that he would then say something about Sprinkling and Infant-Baptism; in which Points, if I would, I should be the Respondent, and he would oppose me. This was the Conclusion of that Debate; in relating which, I have not set down any of those Arguments which I urg'd in Defence of Water-Baptism, or of the Replies that were made to them, because they were not then taken down in Writing, and because they are in the Main, the same with those that I shall have Occasion to give an Account of afterwards.

THREE Weeks being now passed, I began to think of Mr. *Middleton's* return from *London*. Accordingly, on the Third Day of *June*, I receiv'd a Note from Mr. *Symonds*, informing me, that *Joseph Middleton* would be at his House the next Day. And so it happen'd; for the next Morning I receiv'd a Letter from Mr. *Middleton's* own Hand, which was as follows:

Friend Stebbing.

I Am through divine Favour returned again hither: and according to my Promiss am ready to maintain our Principles against all thy opposition: so that if please to come to my Friend Symons this Evening after our Meeting may have thy opportunity: Only expect now to be charged as well as Charge: according as I told thee when last here

who am thy Friend

From Jonathan Symons 4to. 4ti. Men. 1714.

Joseph Middleton.

BEFORE I proceed any farther in this Relation, it will be convenient to observe, that the last Time Mr. *Middleton* and I discours'd together, it was agreed upon by us both, that the next Conference should be held privately, *i. e.* in the Presence of six or eight Persons, or thereabouts, on each Side. I therefore sent an Answer to *Joseph Middleton's* Letter to this Effect, *viz.* That I would accept of his Offer, but had rather (if he approv'd of it) that he and a few of his Friends would come up to my House, (which is a pretty Distance from the Street) as judging that there we might be most secure from Disturbance; however, rather than lose the Opportunity of discoursing with him, that I would come down to Mr. *Symonds's*, provided he would consent that there should not be present at the Debate above ten of each Side. To this Proposal, when the Meeting was ended, I receiv'd this following Answer,

AN ACCOUNT OF A CONFERENCE

Friend Stebbing.

I Can't judge it convenient to come at this Time to thy House: Neither can I restrict the number at this time to thy Proposall: here being a considerable Number of my Friends and others here: and how long they will stay I know not as I was not the Aggressor in the Debate, so don't I now matter how many be present, who am thy Friend

Joseph Middleton.

UPON the Receipt of this Letter, I and a few Gentlemen of my Acquaintance, went down to Mr. Symonds's; where meeting Mr. Middleton in the Yard, I again put him in Mind of his former Proposal, and insisted upon it, that some determinate Number of each Side might only be present at the Debate. To which he reply'd, that it was reported by some after the last Conference, that the Quakers were asham'd of what they had to say, and would therefore very fain have discours'd with me in private, but that it was not permitted them; and that therefore he thought it proper in order to remove that Scandal to defend himself in publick; besides, said he, the People here are all in Expectation of hearing the Debate, and I cannot tell how I shall prevent them. While we were deciding this Point, some of my Friends came to me, and told me, that they thought it most adviseable to go in, forasmuch as they perceiv'd that the Company (who were a great many of them my Parishioners) did expect it, and did believe that none of them would give us any Disturbance. Upon this, I went with Mr. Middleton into the Parlour, where the Doors were open'd for all Comers, and the Room soon fill'd with a considerable Number of both Parties.

As soon as I was sat down, I call'd for my Amanuensis, and desir'd he might sit down by me; at which, Joseph Middleton seem'd some-what disturb'd, telling me, that I did not use him fairly in not letting him know before-hand that I intended to make Use of an Amanuensis, that he might have had the Opportunity of procuring one as well as my self. Friend, reply'd I, you have no Injustice done you. You have your Friends about you, as well as I, and may chuse whom you please. But for my Part, I see no Necessity for it, because you may have the Liberty to see what is written, and if you please take a Copy of the Papers, in which nothing shall be set down on either Side, which is not fairly granted.

THIS Difference being ended, I told Mr. Middleton, that I was now about to make good against him, and the rest of his Sect, the Charge of Heresy. I suppose, said he, thou designest to be upon the same Point that thou wer't upon when I last saw thee, viz. The Necessity of Water-Baptism. I do, reply'd I, and I suppose that you are prepar'd to answer me upon that Point. Yes, said he, I am; but I expect that thou should'st defend Water-Baptism as 'tis practis'd in the Church of England. That's not reasonable, reply'd I, because 'tis not the main Point about which You and I differ. No, said he; why thou art a Priest of the Church of England, art thou not? And wilt thou refuse to defend Water-Baptism as 'tis practis'd by thy self? No, reply'd I, I will not, when 'tis seasonable and proper for me to do so, which at this Time it is not. For as I am a Church of England-Man, so you are a Quaker; and it must be very absurd for me to undertake to defend any particular Way or Manner of baptising with Water against you, when you deny the Thing in gross, by what Way or Manner soever it be practis'd. Before it can be proper to dispute what Persons are capable of being baptis'd with Water, and how, i. e. whether by dipping or by sprinkling, it is necessary to determine whether the Use of Water (in general) be essential to the Christian Baptism; or whether to be baptis'd with Water

Water at all, be a Thing necessary under the Gospel Dispensation. This, Sir, is what you deny; and when I have convinc'd you of this Mistake, it will then be Time enough to engage about these smaller Differences. We were a considerable Time before we could agree upon this Point; Mr. Middleton contending earnestly, that I ought to defend Water-Baptism as 'tis practis'd in the Church of England, and I as stiffly rejecting that Proposal, as absurd and unreasonable. At length I did prevail, and it was granted me, that I should oppose him upon the Subject of Water-Baptism in general.

THE Subject of the Controversy being now concluded upon, I began to argue for the Necessity of Water-Baptism in this following Manner, viz.

That which Christ has made a Condition of our Salvation, is necessary.

But Christ has made Baptism with Water, a Condition of our Salvation. Therefore, &c.

J. M. I DENY the Minor, and affirm, that Christ has not made Baptism with Water, a Condition of our Salvation.

H. S. I PROVE the Minor from Mark 16. 16. *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, &c.*

J. M. I DENY that Christ speaks here of Water-Baptism.

H. S. I PROVE that he does, thus.

The Baptism here spoken of, is either Baptism with Water, or Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

But the Baptism here spoken of, is not Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

Therefore it is Baptism with Water.

J. M. I DENY the Minor again, and affirm, that the Baptism here spoken of, is Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

H. S. I PROVE that it is not, thus.

The Baptism here spoken of, is a perpetual Baptism.

But the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is not a perpetual Baptism.

Therefore the Baptism here spoken of, is not the Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

J. M. I DENY the Minor again, and affirm, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is a perpetual Baptism.

H. S. I PROVE, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is no perpetual Baptism, thus.

That which was confin'd to the Apostles Days, is not perpetual.

But the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was confin'd to the Apostles Days.

Therefore the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is not a perpetual Baptism.

J. M. I DENY the Minor again, and affirm, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was not confin'd to the Apostles Days.

H. S. I PROVE, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was confin'd to the Apostles Days, thus.

If the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, be the miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost, bestowed upon the Apostles at the Day of Pentecost, and enabling them to speak such Languages as they had never learn'd, &c. then Baptism with the Holy Ghost was confin'd to the Apostles Days.

But the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is that miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost, &c.

Therefore it was confin'd to the Apostles Days.

AN ACCOUNT OF A CONFERENCE

J. M. I DENY the Minor again, and affirm, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is not that miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost.

H. S. I PROVE, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is that miraculous Power.

Ist. FROM *Act. 1. 4, 5.* *And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the Promise of the Father, which (saith he) ye have heard of me: For John truly baptized with Water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many Days hence.* From these Words, said I, it is evident, *1st.* That the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was then (*i. e.* immediately before our Saviour's Ascension) a Thing future; for 'tis said, *Ye SHALL be baptis'd,* &c. intimating, that as yet the Apostles were not baptis'd with the Holy Ghost. *2dly.* That the Accomplishment of this Promise, was to happen shortly, within a few Days, and before the Departure of the Apostles from *Jerusalem.* And to shew farther what this Promise of the Father, *i. e.* what this Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was, I referr'd,

SECONDLY, TO *Act. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4.* where we read, that *when the Day of Pentecost was fully come, they (i. e. the Apostles) were all with one Accord in one Place; and suddenly there came a Sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty Wind, and it filled all the House where they were sitting: And there appeared unto them cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them Utterance.* Hence, said I again, 'tis evident, that this miraculous Effusion of the Holy Ghost, at the Day of Pentecost, upon the Apostles, is the Baptism with the Holy Ghost; for this (according to the Promise of our Saviour in the foregoing Chapter) happen'd a few Days after, and we read of nothing else that befel the Apostles between the Time of our Saviour's Ascension, and their Departure from *Jerusalem,* which can be pretended to be the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. And for a farther Confirmation of this, I cited,

THIRDLY, The Testimony of *St. Peter* himself, (*Verf. 32, 33* of this Chapter) declaring positively, that this was the Accomplishment of that Promise, and consequently the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, in these Words; *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are Witnesses. Therefore being by the right Hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.*

IN answer to this, *Mr. Middleton* granted, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost did commence at the Day of Pentecost; but alledged that it ought not to be confin'd to these miraculous Gifts only; adding, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was the Means of initiating Men into the Christian Religion. To this, I reply'd, That the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, could not possibly be the Means of initiating, because many were made true (*i. e.* real) Christians before the Day of Pentecost. Nay, reply'd *Mr. Middleton*, but I affirm, that there was no *substantial* Christians before the Day of Pentecost. No, said I? Why what think you of the Apostles? Were not they made Christians before the Day of Pentecost? To which *Mr. Middleton* reply'd again, That they were not *substantially* so.

I NOW saw plainly, that my Friend had but a very little Compass to turn himself in, and that if he would but give me Leave to move a Step or two farther, he must certainly be catch'd. But he did not care to be pent up any closer, and therefore as soon as ever he perceiv'd that I was about to pursue the Argument, he began to start and fly, and would be for offering at every little Hole where he saw there was a Probability of creeping out. He was now weary of hearing any more dry Syllogisms, and began to cry out, that 'twas

unreasonable for me to talk all, and not suffer him to say any Thing. In short, he was for turning Objector, and embarrassing the Cause, which he saw he was not able to overthrow. To this Proposal I reply'd, Friend *Middleton*, either I have been under a great Mistake, or you are the Respondent in this Controversy; it is not therefore on your Part to object, but to answer Objections. However, since you discover so great an Inclination to change Sides, I shall willingly comply with you. Have Patience only 'till I have made an End of my Argument, and then object as much as you please. All this would not prevail. *Joseph* was uneasy under his Confinement, and would fain be going to work with me immediately; in which Proposal he was back'd by several of the Quakers who stood by. Wherefore seeing him so very eager, I consented that he should have the Liberty of proposing his Objections. I question not but the judicious Reader does already perceive how the reckoning at present stands between us; but because it is likely that the greatest part of those who will think it worth their While to peruse these Papers, may be such as are not able of themselves to see these Conclusions so very distinctly, I shall for their Sakes beg Leave to subjoin a few Remarks upon the foregoing Arguments.

R E M A R K S.

THE main Thing to be decided in this Argument, was this, *viz.* Whether the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, ought to be confin'd to the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, or not? Mr. *Middleton*, you see, says it ought not to be so confin'd; and affirms withal, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was the Means whereby Men are initiated into the Christian Religion. This indeed, if true, would demonstratively prove, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, must not be confin'd to those miraculous Gifts only, because it must be granted, that many are made Christians in these Days, and yet none are endu'd with these miraculous Gifts. But how does Mr. *Middleton* answer my Objection against this, *viz.* That many were made Christians before the Day of Pentecost, and yet, according to his own Concession, the Baptism with the Holy Ghost did not commence or begin 'till then? Why you see how, *viz.* By saying that before the Day of Pentecost none, not so much as the Apostles themselves, were *substantial* Christians. Now, what he means by *substantial* Christians, you will understand when I have told you, that to prove this Assertion, (*viz.* That the Apostles were no *substantial* Christians before Pentecost) he instanc'd the Case of St. *Peter*, who deny'd his Master, and that of all the Disciples, who when our Saviour was in Danger of being apprehended by the Jews, *forsook him, and fled*, Mat. 26. 56. So that it seems by a *substantial* Christian, he means one who is without Failings. And verily in that Sense the Apostles were *substantial* Christians neither before the Day of Pentecost nor after. All Men have their Infirmities and Imperfections; and the Apostles had theirs, as well as others; so that according to Mr. *Middleton's* Notion there never was nor ever will be any *substantial* Christians in the whole World. But if we may call those Persons *substantial* Christians who are within the Covenant of Christ, and have a Right to all the Benefits and Privileges thereof, then it is most evident, that not only the Apostles, but many besides, were *substantial* Christians before the Day of Pentecost. If Mr. *Middleton* will not allow such Persons the Name of *substantial* Christians, I shall not contend with him about the Use of that Word; but then I must beg Leave to tell him, that the Reply which he has given to my Objection, is nothing at all to the Purpose. For it must be granted, that Men may be initiated into the Christian Religion, and yet not be arriv'd to Perfection, (as the Word Initiation implies) yea, as in human Sciences a Man must be a Learner before he can be a Master of his Profession; so in this spiritual one, we must of Necessity be first of all Beginners, (or, as the Apostle expresses himself 1 Cor. 3. 1. *Babes in Christ*) before we can possibly attain to

any compleat Proficiency therein. Now, the Question between Mr. *Middleton* and me, is not concerning the latter, but concerning the former. He maintains, that Men were initiated into Christianity by the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. He affirms likewise, that this Baptism with the Holy Ghost did not commence till the Day of Pentecost; and upon my objecting that many were made Christians before that Time, he replies, that none were *substantially* so, *i.e.* compleat and perfect Christians. But what is this to the Purpose? Were none initiated before Pentecost? Were none within the Gospel-Covenant before our Saviour's Ascension? I did not ask Mr. *Middleton* any of these Questions, being, as I said before, diverted from my Argument by his Objections. But there is no need to stay for an Answer. I will answer for him without asking him Leave. For if, as he pretends, the Baptism with the Holy Ghost be that by which Men are initiated into Christianity, it is evident even from his own Concessions, that none, no, not the Apostles themselves, were so much as initiated or made Profelytes to Christ before the Day of Pentecost. I am apt to imagine, that Mr. *Middleton* was not aware of this Consequence, when he asserted, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was the Means of Initiation; but since I have now laid it so open before his Eyes, as I think he cannot avoid discovering the Absurdity of it; so I hope he has not so little Modesty, as to pretend any longer to defend the Premises.

TO CONCLUDE. Mr. *Middleton* by granting, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost did not commence till the Day of Pentecost, has entirely given up the Cause, which by all his Arguments, he would endeavour to maintain, *viz.* That Baptism with the Holy Ghost is the only true Christian Baptism. For he allows, that Men are initiated into Christianity by Baptism; and 'tis certain, that that Baptism whereby Men are made Christians, is a true Christian Baptism. Now, since it is evident that many were made Christians before the Day of Pentecost, it follows, that true Christian Baptism was administer'd, before the Baptism with the Holy Ghost was in Being. And indeed he that will deny this, must not only contradict what has been prov'd, but the plain Words of the Scriptures themselves, by which we are assur'd, that Christian Baptism was administer'd before the Day of Pentecost. The Place I mean, is this: *When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more Disciples than John, though Jesus himself baptized not, but his Disciples, &c. Joh. 4. 1, 2.* Some Quakers indeed will pretend, that the Disciples of Christ baptis'd, at this Time, unto *John's* Baptism. But this is ridiculous: For if this were true, it would follow, that Christ did not now make Disciples to himself, but to *John*; which is absurd, and contrary to the Text.

To go on now with the RELATION.

It being consented to, (as I said before) that Mr. *Middleton* should propose his Objections; he began with that Text of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 12. 13. *For by one Spirit, we are all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be Bond or Free, &c.* Whence he concluded, that all Christians were then, and are always to be baptis'd with the Holy Ghost.

Now to this Objection, I reply'd, That the Word ALL in this Text, was not to be interpreted as comprehending every individual Christian, but only such particular Christians as the Apostle was speaking of at that Time, which (as appears from the first and following Verses of the Chapter) were the (*οἱ πνευματικοί*) *Spiritual Persons*, or Persons endu'd with the miraculous and extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost; and that the mention of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *Bond* and *Free*, referr'd only to some few of all sorts, as some *Jews*, some *Gentiles*, &c. Upon this, there arose a Dispute between us whether the Word *πνευματικῶν* in the first Verse, ought to be translated *Persons* or *Gifts*, as our vulgar

Vulgar Translation has it. Mr. *Middleton* contended for the latter, and I for the former, urging, that the Word *πνευματικῶν*, was both Masculine and Neuter; and that to translate it *Persons*, was most agreeable to the Context. But I did not think it worth my While to contend much about it, because, whether it be interpreted the one Way or the other, the Sense of the Apostle will be the same. I proceeded therefore to read over the whole Chapter, and shew'd from the Apostle's Discourse, that he was then giving Directions not concerning all Christians in general, but concerning those in particular, who were endu'd with the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost: That therefore the Meaning of the Apostle, when he said, *By one Spirit are all baptized, &c.* was not that he and every individual Christian, were baptized with the Holy Ghost, but that he, and all those who were baptized with the Holy Ghost, *i. e.* endu'd with those extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, were thereby united into one common Body or Society. To all this, Mr. *Middleton* made only this Reply, *viz.* That the spiritual Gifts here spoken of, ought not (as I suppos'd) to be restrain'd to the miraculous and extraordinary Gifts only, because here is Mention made of some that were not extraordinary, but common to all Christians, insisting particularly in that of *Wisdom*, spoken of at the 8th Verse. To which, I answer'd, that the *Wisdom* here spoken of, was not such a *Wisdom* as is common to all Christians, but a miraculous and extraordinary *Wisdom*: And this I think is evident, amongst several others that might be mention'd, from this one Argument, *viz.* That the *Wisdom* here spoken of, is appropriated to some peculiar Persons, in Contradistinction to others, who had other spiritual Gifts bestow'd upon them; for 'tis said, *to one is given the Word of Wisdom, to another the Word of Knowledge, to another Faith, &c.* all which is utterly inconsistent with supposing, that the *Wisdom*, the *Knowledge*, or the *Faith*, here spoken of, are such Gifts as are common to all.

THE next Argument that Mr. *Middleton* brought to prove the Universality and Perpetuity of Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was that Saying of the same St. Paul, Rom. 8. 9. *Now if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Here I granted the whole, and put it upon him to shew, that by *having the Spirit of Christ*, was meant being baptiz'd with the Holy Ghost. That no one can be a living Member of Christ, who does not partake of the Gifts or Graces of his Holy Spirit, I acknowledg'd. But then I deny'd, that all partaking of the Spirit of Christ, is being baptiz'd with the Holy Ghost. Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and Regeneration, are (I affirm'd) two distinct Things; and he who is made Partaker of the one, is not therefore made Partaker of the other. All the Answer that Mr. *Middleton* made to this, was, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and Regeneration, are one and the same Thing; so that we were now, after a Debate of above two Hours, brought back again to the same Point where we at first began, *viz.* Whether Baptism with the Holy Ghost ought to be confin'd to the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, or whether it ought to be extended to the sanctifying Grace of God's Spirit? And it lay upon my Adversary to make good the latter, by answering all those Arguments I had brought to prove the former. How well qualify'd he was to do this, I shall leave the Reader to judge from what has been said.

THIS Argument being brought to a full Conclusion, and Mr. *Middleton* proposing no more Objections, I told him, that I thought I had now very plainly prov'd, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was the being endu'd with the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and consequently could not be that Baptism which Christ has enjoin'd as the Condition of our Salvation. Friend, reply'd he, thou hast as yet prov'd nothing. Thou hast not urg'd so much as one Text of Scripture where Christ has commanded Water-Baptism. I thought I had sufficiently done this, by shewing, that the Baptism spoken of by our Saviour in the Text, which we were then arguing upon, could not be understood

of Baptism with the Holy Ghost; but perceiving that he was not to be made to see the Force of that Argument, which was, I think, urg'd in its full Strength, I told him, that it would be to no Purpose for me to repeat the same Thing over and over, and therefore if he pleas'd, I would proceed to another Argument.

Mr. MIDDLETON desiring me to proceed, I again resum'd the Place of Opponent, and urg'd the Command of our Saviour Christ to his Apostles, Mat. 28. 19. *Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Here again it was put upon me to shew, that our Saviour in this Text commanded Water-Baptism, which I endeavour'd to do,

FIRST, From the force of the Greek Word βαπτίζω, which (said I) does properly signify, to *Dip* or *Wash*. This was granted me, and then I proceeded to argue from Mr. Barclay, thus:

We ought not to go from the literal Signification of the Text, unless some urgent Necessity force us thereunto.

But no urgent Necessity in this Place, forceth us thereunto.

Therefore we ought not to go from it.

Mr. MIDDLETON seem'd to be somewhat surpriz'd at my quoting Mr. Barclay, and said it was not his Business to defend that Author; But desir'd to see the Paper where I had set down this Passage of Barclay, that he might read it himself. Accordingly he read over the whole Passage, which (as may be seen *Apol. Prop. 12. p. 486.*) stands thus: *Secondly, They object Matt. 28. 19. Go ye therefore, &c. This is the great Objection upon which they build the whole Superstructure. Whereunto the first general and sound Answer, is, by granting the whole, and putting them to prove, that Water is here meant, since the Text is silent of it. And though it be in Reason sufficient on our Part, that we concede the whole express'd in the Text, but deny that 'tis by Water, which is an Addition to the Text, yet I shall premise some Reasons why we do so, &c. The first is a Maxim yielded to by all, That we ought not to go from the literal Meaning of the Text, &c.*

WHAT think you now, Sir, said I? are not these Words of Mr. Barclay full against you? You grant that βαπτίζω in its literal Meaning, signifies to *Dip* or *Wash*. Mr. Barclay says positively, that there is no Necessity of going from the literal Meaning of the Text in this Place, and that therefore we ought not to go from it. — Here Mr. Middleton began to shuffle, asking me what R. Barclay had said farther. Nothing at all, said I, as to this Point, for 'tis a full Sentence. No! said he, that's strange indeed, that R. Barclay should have said no more, when he has treated so largely upon this Subject. Here another Quaker put in, and said, That he did remember these Words of Barclay very well, but believ'd that I had misrepresented his Meaning. — But, added Mr. Middleton farther, does not the Word βαπτίζω sometimes signify an inward Washing? If it does, reply'd I, it is us'd in a figurative or improper Sense. But 'tis the literal Signification which we are now speaking of; and in that it most certainly signifies an outward Washing. Joseph Middleton had no other Way to get out of this Noose, than by breaking it directly asunder; and therefore he reply'd very roundly, That the Word βαπτίζω, in its literal Sense, may signify washing in BLOOD, as well as in WATER. At this, some of the more sensible Quakers seem'd confounded; and I thought I had nothing more to do, as to this Argument, than to call to my Amanuensis to set this down as Mr. Middleton's Answer; which was done accordingly.

R E-

REMARKS.

THE Maxim of Mr. Barclay here, viz. *That we ought not to go from the literal Meaning of a Text, without some urgent Necessity*, is a very true and good Maxim. For if Men may go from the literal Sense at their own Pleasures, they may turn the whole Scripture into Allegory; and there can be no Certainty what to trust to. I do therefore very much wonder, that so great a Man as Mr. Barclay, should not see, that by urging this Maxim, he had utterly ruin'd the Cause he had undertaken to defend. For the Word βαπτίζω in its literal Sense, does most certainly signify to dip or wash a Thing in some Liquor; and since no other Liquor was ever us'd in Baptism, but Water, 'tis plain, according to this very Rule, that our Saviour, by bidding his Apostles go and baptize all Nations, commanded them to baptize or wash them in Water. But see how this cunning Sophist has guarded against this Objection! *Water*, says he, *is an Addition to the Text*; insinuating as if the Addition of Words *with Water*, was an altering the Sense of the Word *baptize* from a *literal*, to a figurative Signification. But this is a vain conceit: For the literal Signification of the Word *baptize*, as it signifies an outward Washing, is still retain'd, and the Addition of the Words *with Water* only specifies the particular Kind of Liquor by which this washing is performed; which makes no Manner of Alteration in the Case. If Mr. Barclay will grant me, that βαπτίζω, in its literal Sense, signifies an outward or bodily washing, as he certainly must; then I will tell him, without altering the Text, that the Liquor must be Water, since, as I said before, and as every one must know, no other Liquor but Water was ever us'd in Baptism. It is the same Thing therefore, as to the literal Meaning of the Word, to say, *Go and baptize*, as it is to say, *Go and baptize with Water*: As it is exactly the same to say, *Go and circumcise*, as to say, *Go and circumcise the Foreskin of the Flesh*, because no other Part but the Foreskin was to be circumcis'd.

THIS however, though at the Bottom 'tis no better than an Evasion, shews something of Parts and Subtilty in the Man. But what can be said for Mr. Middleton? He grants, that the Word βαπτίζω does, in its literal Meaning, signify Dipping or Washing; but because he is resolv'd that Water shall not be here spoken of, he will have it that it may be understood of Blood as well. Shameful Obstinacy! As if our Saviour could have commanded his Disciples to go and wash all Nations in Blood! I am almost apt to fancy, that before we parted, Mr. Middleton himself began to be sensible of the Absurdity he had run himself to. For I remember, that when we came to examine the Papers after the Conference was ended, he would fain have had this Place alter'd, by putting in BY BLOOD, instead of IN BLOOD, and then he said he would stand by it. I cannot, for my Part, understand what Difference this will make, for take it which Way you will, 'tis such Nonsense, that I think he has Reason to be ashamed on't.

To proceed in the ACCOUNT.

I NOW went on to a second Argument, to prove, that this Command of our Saviour to his Apostles, to *go and baptize all Nations*, must be understood of Water-Baptism. And to bring the Point to a speedy Conclusion, I desir'd of Mr. Middleton to be resolv'd in this plain Question, viz. Whether the Baptism *in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, and Baptism *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, were one and the same Baptism? It was granted me, that they are one and the same Baptism. And upon this, I reply'd, That then Baptism in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, (which was the Baptism that the Apostles were here commanded to administer)

could not be Baptism with the Holy Ghost, because the Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, are mention'd in Scripture as two distinct Baptisms; yea, the Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus, is expressly said to be Baptism with Water. For the Proof of this, I refer'd him to *Acts* 10. 47, 48. Where, after the Holy Ghost had fallen upon *Cornelius* and his Company, by the Preaching of *St. Peter*, the Apostle has these Words; *Can any Man forbid Water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?* And then (as we read in the following Verse) *he commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus.* Here, said I, it is evident, that Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus, cannot be Baptism with the Holy Ghost, because these Persons were first baptized with the Holy Ghost, and then in the Name of the Lord Jesus. 'Tis evident also, positively, That Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus, is Baptism with Water, because the Apostle makes express Mention of Water, as that where-with they were to be baptized. Wherefore, from the whole, I drew up this following Argument, *viz.*

Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus, (as is evident from this Place) is Baptism with Water.

But Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and Baptism in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, are (according to your own Concession) one and the same Baptism.

Therefore our Saviour, in commanding his Apostles to go and baptize all Nations in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, commanded them to baptize with Water.

HERE *Mr. Middleton* would not deny any Proposition, but began (as his constant Manner was) to start Objections, which had no Relation to the Point in Hand. Particularly he made a great stir about the Signification of the Words *in the Name*, which he would have (in Conformity to his Master *Barclay*) to be the same with *into the Power*. I might very well have disputed this Interpretation with him, but 'tis nothing at all to the Purpose. For whether to baptize *in the Name*, &c. signifies to baptize *into the Power*, or any Thing else, 'tis plain that Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus, is Baptism with Water; which was the only Thing I was concern'd to prove, to make the Argument good.

R E M A R K S.

THE Baptism *in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, is so plainly distinguish'd in Scripture from the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, as that nothing can be plainer. Besides the Text above quoted, the Reader may at his Leisure consult *Acts* 8. 16. and Chap. 19. 5, 6. In both which Places the Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus, must of Necessity be understood of Water-Baptism. So that since *Mr. Middleton* has acknowledg'd, that Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and Baptism in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, are one and the same Baptism, I see not how he can possibly deny the Conclusion, *viz.* That Baptism in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, &c. is Water-Baptism.

HERE are therefore, from this Command of our Saviour, two Arguments made good against *Mr. Middleton*, for the Necessity of Water-Baptism. The first drawn from the Sense of the Word *Baptize*; and the second from the Identity of the Baptism *in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, with the Baptism *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. To which, give me Leave now to add a third, which does also follow from *Mr. Middleton's* own Con-

Concession. He has before granted, that Men are initiated into Christianity, or made Profelytes to Christ, by Baptism. I have prov'd, that the Baptism by which Men are initiated, cannot be Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and consequently that it must be Baptism with Water. Wherefore, if it can be prov'd, that the Baptism which our Saviour here commanded his Apostles to administer, is that Baptism whereby Men are made Profelytes to Christ, it necessarily will follow, that it must be Water-Baptism. Now, this is evident from the express Words of the Text, as they are in the *Greek*, which are these, Πορευθέντες ἐν μαθηλεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς, &c. That is, *Go ye therefore, and (not TEACH all Nations, as our Translation has it, because TEACHING is mention'd in the following Verse, but) MAKE DISCIPLES of all Nations, baptizing (or by baptizing) them.* Which is as much as if he had said, *Go and make Profelytes, or initiate all Nations into the Christian Religion, by administering Baptism to them.*

TO PROCEED.

WE had now been disputing very near four Hours, and it began to grow dark. Wherefore, though I had a great deal more to offer in Defence of Water-Baptism, yet being almost spent with the Heat of the Room, and with so much speaking, I began to think of taking my Leave of them. And indeed would my Breath have held me out any longer, I had but little Encouragement to bestow any more of it upon them. For to what Purpose is it to multiply Arguments, when a Man comes once to perceive, that the Persons with whom he is discoursing, do either want Sense to discern the Force of an Argument, or else are resolv'd obstinately to hold out against Conviction? One of these two seem'd to be the Case of *Joseph Middleton* and his Friends; and therefore despairing now of doing any Good with them, I told them, that it was late, (it being then past Nine a-Clock) and that therefore I could not stay to discourse any farther with them. That if they would seriously and impartially reflect upon the Arguments that I had already offer'd, (which I pray'd God heartily they might) I did not question but they would see that I had sufficiently made good against them the Charge of Heresy. The Answer which *Mr. Middleton* gave to this, was that which he had often repeated during the Conference, *viz.* That I had prov'd nothing; and in this he was seconded by several of the Quakers who stood by. To this, I reply'd, Friends, I think I have; and I am sorry it is to so little Purpose. There is a Cure for Ignorance, but there is none for Obstinacy; and if an Angel were to be sent from Heaven to convert you, I can't tell whether he would meet with better Success than I have done. I must therefore content my self to recommend you to the Mercy of Almighty God, if at any Time it may please him to open your Eyes, and to give you a Sight of your Errors.

I WAS now moving to leave the Room, when it was propos'd by one of the Quakers there present, that, according to my Promise, they might have a Copy of the Papers. Friend, said I, it is late, and it will take some Time to write them over fairly. I had rather therefore that I may have the Liberty of taking them Home with me. I will transcribe them to Morrow Morning, and you shall chuse whether you will have the Copy or the Original. But they were all for having it done before we left the Room, and I desir'd the Amateurs to do it accordingly.

WHILST the Papers were transcribing, (which was about half an Hour) I discours'd with several of the Quakers upon divers Matters, as they were accidentally propos'd. *Mr. Middleton*, in particular, started an Objection against Water-Baptism, *viz.* That if the Apostles had look'd upon Baptism with Water, to have been sufficient, without the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, how it came

to pass that so many were baptiz'd with the Holy Ghost, after they were baptized with Water? To this, I reply'd, That the Reason of this was not because Baptism with the Holy Ghost was look'd upon to be generally necessary to Salvation, but because the peculiar Exigencies of those Times did make it necessary that some should be baptiz'd with the Holy Ghost. That is, because it was necessary that some few Persons should be endu'd with these extraordinary Gifts, in order to the Propagation of the Gospel throughout the World. This put me in Mind of turning the Question the other Way, and forming an Objection against the Quakers, which, I conceiv'd, would not be so easily answer'd, *viz.* How it came to pass that so many were baptized with Water, after they were baptiz'd with the Holy Ghost, if Baptism with Water was not look'd upon to be necessary? And then I instanc'd in the Case of *Cornelius*, and his Company, before mention'd. All the Reply that was given to this, was, That it was done in Compliance to the Weakness of those Times, as Circumcision was.

THIS is a Pretence of the Quakers, which they always urge, but never prove, and therefore it would have been Answer good enough, barely to have deny'd it. But whilst I was preparing to give a full Reply to this Answer, I was interrupted by another of them, (who is a Speaker) with this Question, *viz.* How came *Paul* to thank God that he baptized none of the Corinthians, but *Crispus* and *Gaius*, if Baptism with Water be necessary? To this, I reply'd, by asking him another Question, *viz.* How he knew that Water-Baptism is here spoken of, since Water is not mention'd in the Text? O! this is plain, says he, of it self. I did not ask this Question, because I doubted whether *St. Paul* spake of Water-Baptism, but only to shew the Quakers arbitrary Way of interpreting Scripture, by making Baptism where Water is not mention'd, to signify Baptism with Water, or without, just as they think will best serve their Turn. And therefore I did not put it upon my Adversary, to shew that Water-Baptism is here spoken of; which, (had I taken the same Liberty of arguing that they do, upon other Occasions) as plain as it is, might perhaps have cost him some Pains to have done, but proceeded in my Reply, and told him, That the Reason why *St. Paul* thank'd God, that he had baptized none but *Crispus* and *Gaius*, was not that he lookt upon Water-Baptism to be an unnecessary Rite, nor yet because he thought that in baptizing *Crispus* and *Gaius*, he had gone beyond his Commission; but because HE IN PARTICULAR did baptize no more, and so they could not make Use of his Name to countenance those Dissentions that were among them, upon the Account of the Persons by whom they were baptiz'd. Nay but, urg'd he, does not *Paul* say positively, that he *was not sent to baptize, but to preach*? That he does, reply'd I, and what dost thou infer from thence? Why, said he, and *Mr. Middleton* with him, That Baptizing was no Part of *Paul's* Commission. If that be true, said I, then it will follow, that baptizing with the Holy Ghost, was no Part of his Commission. Nay, said they, for *Paul* speaks here only of baptizing with Water. He speaks in general, said I, that he *was not sent to baptize*; which (according to your Interpretation) would be false, if he had a Commission to baptize in any Sense whatsoever. But, added I, *St. Paul* was sent (*i. e.* had a Commission) to baptize, and to baptize with Water too. And therefore, by his saying that he *was not sent*, he did not mean that he had no Commission, but only that he was not sent principally to baptize, or that baptizing was not the main Concern he was to take care of.

R E M A R K S.

I. THE Pretence that the Apostles us'd Baptism with Water for no other Reason than they did Circumcision, *viz.* in Condescension to the *Jews*, being always much insisted upon by the Quakers in their Discourses upon this Subject: I beg leave to add the following Observations to shew the weakness of it, *viz.*

I. THE

1. THE Apostles baptiz'd the *Gentiles*, as well as the *Jews*, with Water, and therefore this Plea is groundless.

2. WHEN St. Paul circumcis'd *Timothy*, *Act.* 16. he gives this Reason for it, *viz.* That it was *because of the Jews, who were in those Quarters*, and amongst whom he was to preach. Now, 'tis strange if they had baptiz'd for the same Reason, that they should not somewhere have said so, since there is so frequent Mention of Water-Baptism. But we find no such Passage in the whole Scriptures where Water-Baptism is said to have been administer'd because of the *Jews*, nor any Thing like it.

3. ST. PAUL has several exprefs Texts against Circumcision. *In Christ Jesus*, says he, *neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision.* *Gal.* 6. 15. And before, at *Chap.* 5. v. 2. he says with great Earnestness, *If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.* But we find no such Expressions any where, concerning Water-Baptism; which would be very unaccountable, if this were to have been abolish'd, as well as Circumcision.

4. WE have a Determination of the Council at *Jerusalem*, *Act.* 15. against Circumcision, and the rest of the legal Ordinances. And how came it to pass, that there is nothing there determin'd against Water-Baptism, if that were likewise to cease as well as Circumcision?

5. CIRCUMCISION ceas'd soon after the Apostles Days, but I challenge the Quakers to tell me of one national Church since the Days of the Apostles, where Water-Baptism has not been practis'd. What Account can be given of this from the Quakers Scheme? If the Apostles had practis'd Water-Baptism in Compliance to the *Jews*, as they did Circumcision, is it credible that they should not declare as much whenever they saw Men eager to be baptiz'd? And if they did declare this, what Reason can be given why the one ceas'd, and the other did not? It might be worth Mr. *Middleton's* While to think of some Answer to these Arguments.

II. To suppose that St. Paul thank'd God that he baptiz'd no more of the *Corinthians*, but *Crispus* and *Gaius*, for this Reason, *viz.* Because looking upon Water-Baptism to be a carnal and unnecessary Ordinance, he therefore thought it to be a Matter of Joy that no more were baptiz'd, is very absurd and ridiculous. For though St. Paul baptiz'd no more than these two, yet 'tis plain, that the rest of the believing *Corinthians* were baptiz'd as well as they. The *Corinthians*, it seems, had divided themselves into several Factions, upon the Account of the several Persons by whom they were baptiz'd; for one said, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephass. *1 Cor.* 1. 12. Cephass therefore, and Apollos, baptiz'd as well as Paul. Yea, we have an Account, *Act.* 18. 8. where the baptizing *Crispus* is recorded, that they were all baptiz'd. For *many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized; i. e.* many of the *Corinthians* believ'd; and those who believ'd, were all of them baptiz'd. Neither is it less irrational, to suppose, that St. Paul thank'd God, because he thought that he had no Commission to baptize, and was glad that he had gone beyond his Commission in so few Instances; (which I remember was the Reason that Mr. *Middleton* urg'd at the first Conference) for besides that St. Paul baptiz'd in other Places, as well as at *Corinth*, there can be no Question but that, if he did baptize *Crispus* and *Gaius* in Compliance to the *Jews*, he saw the same Necessity for it, that he did for circumcising *Timothy*; and that therefore there was the same Reason why he should have thank'd God that he had circumcis'd no more, than that he had baptiz'd no more. But do we ever find St. Paul thanking God for this? No, nor was there any Occasion he should, because it was no Fault. For Circumcision was a Thing indifferent, and so, upon the Quaker's

Supposition, was Baptism too; and therefore when the Prejudices of Men made it necessary, they were both lawful and advicable; and then there would be no Reason why any one should be glad, (as to his own Part) or to thank God that he had seldom practis'd them. The plain Reason therefore why St. Paul thank'd God, was that which I have already assign'd, viz. That since he had baptiz'd so few of them, they could not make Use of his Name to countenance their Differences. And this is the Reason assign'd by St. Paul himself, in the following Verse; *Lest any one should say that I had baptized in my own Name.*

To conclude the RELATION.

WHILST I was thus talking to this Quaker, one *Edward Dykes* (another famous Speaker) propos'd to me a Method of farther Disputation. Which when I declined, he and some other Quakers that stood by, began to treat me with some rudeness. Whereupon, the Papers being now transcribed and examined and approved by Mr. *Middleton*, I gave him the Original, and took my leave.

THIS is the whole Account of this Conference, in which I cannot pretend that every Word is set down that was spoken, nor that any Thing is mention'd, but what was taken down in Writing. But this I do solemnly declare, that nothing herein is reported, as said by either of us, which was not said; nor any Thing omitted, which is material and pertinent to the Points that were debated. In short, that what was wrote down at the Conference, is here fairly represented, the Minutes which stand at the End of this Account, will, I hope, sufficiently demonstrate. And as to that Part which was not wrote down, (as indeed in such a Multiplicity of Words every Thing could not be) I have, besides those whose Testimonials are hereunto subscrib'd, several other credible and substantial Witnesses to attest the Truth of it.

Henry Stebbing.

June 11th, 1714.

I Do hereby certify, that I was present at the last Conference between Mr. Stebbing and Joseph Middleton, and that I did hear the whole Debate. And I do farther certify, that I have perus'd this Account, and that I find it exactly agreeable to what was said on both Sides.

James Paston, M. D.

June 11th, 1714.

I Was present at these two Disputes between Mr. Henry Stebbing and Joseph Middleton, being very near them both all the Time. And do by this certify, that this is a true Narrative of what then happen'd.

Samuel Mabourn,

Master of the Free-School in Botesdale.

June 18th, 1714.

I Do hereby certify, that I was present at the first Conference all the Time, and at the last, from the Beginning 'till the Papers were writing over. I do also certify, that I have perus'd this Account, and that I do find it exactly agreeable to what was said on both Sides.

Moses Leake, Rector of Hopton.

June

Jun. 17. 1714.

I Do hereby certify, that I was present at both these Disputes: That I was desir'd by Mr. Stebbing to take down in Writing the Substance of the Arguments and Answers on both Sides; and that this is a true Account of what then happen'd.

John Hawes.

A Copy of the Minutes.

S. That which Christ has made the Condition of Salvation, is necessary. But Christ has made Baptism with Water, the Condition, &c. *Ergo.*

M. Denies the Minor.

S. Mark. 16. 16. *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.*

Either the Baptism here spoken of, is Baptism with Water, or it is Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

But the Baptism here spoken of, is not the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. *Ergo.*

M. Denies the Minor.

S. The Baptism here spoken of, is a perpetual Baptism.

But the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is not a perpetual Baptism. *Ergo.*

M. Minor.

S. That which was confin'd to the Apostles Days, is not perpetual.

But the Baptism, &c. *Ergo.*

M. Minor.

S. If Baptism with the Holy Ghost, be the miraculous Power of speaking unlearn'd Languages, which was conferr'd upon the Apostles at the Day of Pentecost, then Baptism with the Holy Ghost is not perpetual. But, &c. *Ergo.*

M. Minor.

S. Act. 1. 3, 4, 5. Chap. 2. 1. & Seq. v. 33. From these Texts of Scripture, I conclude, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was still to come. Farther, that it was to be in a few Days. Farther, that the miraculous Gift of Tongues, &c. was that Baptism.

M. Denies here that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is confin'd to those miraculous Gifts, and says, that it was the Means of initiating Men into the Christian Religion.

He grants, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was to commence at the Day of Pentecost.

S. Urges from this Concession, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost could not be the Rite of Initiation, because many were made true Christians before the Day of Pentecost.

M. Replies, that there were no substantial Christians before the Day of Pentecost.

S. He who sincerely believes in Christ, and sincerely follows his Commands, is a true Christian.

But the Apostles of Christ were such. *Ergo.*

M. To prove that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was to continue after the Apostles Days, urges this Text of Scripture, 1 Cor. 12. 13.

S. Replies, that 1st, this Text is not to be understood of all Christians in general, and that the Mention of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, bond and free, in the same Verse, only signifies some few Persons of all Sorts, as some *Jews*, some *Gentiles*. Affirms, 2dly, That the Persons here spoken of were Persons miraculously endu'd with the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

M. Now, if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, Rom. 8. 9.

S. Denies, that by having the Spirit of Christ, is meant Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

S. *Mat.* 28. 19. proves, that this Text is to be understood of Water-Baptism, from the Etymology of the Word Baptize.

M. Baptize, in its literal Signification, is dipping or washing.

S. Answers from *Barclay*,

That we ought not to go from the literal Signification of the Text, unless some urgent Necessity oblige us thereunto.

But no Necessity urges thereunto. *Ergo*.

M. Says, that Baptism in the literal Signification of dipping, may be in Blood, as well as Water.

S. Baptism into the Name of the Lord Jesus, and Baptism in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and Holy Ghost, is all one.

M. Grants it.

S. Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus, is not Baptism with the Holy Ghost, because 'tis distinguish'd from it in Scripture. *Act.* 10. 44, 48, &c.

Baptism into the Name of the Lord Jesus, signifies Baptism with Water, as is plain from these Texts.

You grant, that Baptism in the Name of the Father, Son, &c. *Ergo*.

John baptiz'd with Water, &c.

Middleton supposeth, that this Text disannuls Water-Baptism.

N. B. The Reader will observe some Improproprieties of Speech in these Minutes, which being occasion'd through Haste, he is desir'd to pardon.

Henry Stebbing.

June 18. 1714.

I Do certify, that I transcrib'd these Minutes from the original Papers, and that it is a true Copy.

John Hawes.

June 18. 1714.

I Do certify, that I was present when these Papers were transcrib'd, and examin'd by Mr. Stebbing and Joseph Middleton; and that Joseph Middleton made no Objection either against the Original or the Copy, but only concerning the Words IN BLOOD, which he desir'd might be alter'd to BY BLOOD.

James Paston, M. D.

A DE-

A
D E F E N C E
OF THE FOREGOING
A C C O U N T,
AND OF THE
D O C T R I N E
O F
W A T E R - B A P T I S M:
IN ANSWER TO THE
O B J E C T I O N S
O F
G E O R G E G I B S O N.

By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.

Written in the Year, 1715.

DEFEINCE

OF THE FOREGOING

ACCOUNT

AND OF THE

DOCTRINE

OF

WATER-BAPTISM

IN ANSWER TO THE

OBJECTIONS

OF
GEORGE GIBSON.

By HENRY STEBBING, M.A.

Written in the Year, 1715.

—A—



A R E P L Y
T O
G E O R G E G I B S O N ' s
V I N D I C A T I O N , & c .

AFTER above a Year's Silence comes out at last an Answer to my Account of a Conference held with *Joseph Middleton*, not (as might reasonably have been expected) from Mr. *Middleton* himself, but from one who was no otherwise concern'd in the Dispute than as a common Auditor. There is however reason enough to believe that though *George Gibson* has taken to himself the credit of this Performance, it is nevertheless the work of some other hands besides his own. *G. G.* himself seems to insinuate as much. (*a*) *Lest*, says he, *some sober and religiously inclined People should be stumbled suspecting Us to be somewhat culpable if We altogether pass it in silence; it may be expedient to give a word of intelligence.* — *Also to clear our Christian Principles in the sight of Men as it may please the Lord to enable Us in our incumbent duty* — *the discharge of which is the intent of these following Lines.* 'Tis Religion, we know, with this sort of Men not to use the plural Number when a single Person is only spoken of; and therefore by the *Us* and the *We*, *G. G.* cannot mean himself alone, but himself and his Friends; of which I am yet farther satisfied by what I lately heard from a very considerable Quaker in these Parts, who assured me that he himself had the perusal of these Papers and made such amendments and alterations therein as he thought proper, and that the same liberty had been taken by diverse others of that persuasion. This Book then ought to be understood as containing the Sense not of *G. G.* only, but of *G. G.* and the principal at least of those who were present at the debate, who have approved it, and published it as their joynt answers to my printed Account, and under this view it will not I hope be thought impertinent if I take it into consideration.

I BEGIN with one Observation which is very material; and that is, That the Quakers have not here charged me with misrepresenting the Conference as it stood between *J. M.* and me; which Silence the Reader I hope will take as a full Acknowledgment of my Impartiality; since 'tis by no means likely that if I had either concealed any thing that was said, or set down any thing which was not said, their Zeal for their Cause would have suffered them to have

passed it over. G. G. says indeed, that (b) *I have given an imperfect Account in my Book, of some Discourse, which I had with HIM at the Conference, in not publishing it with the rest, as was expected by Persons of divers Persuasions.* If there were any such Persons as these, they were very unreasonable. For what had I to do to take notice of what G. G. said, in the Report of a Conference held with J. M.? He was the Man that was chosen out by the Quakers to answer my Objections; and accordingly he was the only Man whose Answers were taken down in Writing. Methinks then it was enough to acquaint the World fairly and truly what these Answers were, without troubling either it or my self, with a Rehearsal of the Impertinencies of every one that thought fit to interpose. Had any thing been offer'd more solid by G. G. or any other, than what was offer'd by J. M. in Answer to any of my Arguments, I should not have failed to have inserted it with the Rest, though even this I should not have been obliged to by the Rules of the Dispute. But that nothing of this kind was offer'd, I appeal to any one who will but be at the trouble of reading G. G.'s Book, in which he will not find any thing of moment, mentioned as omitted by me, which was not offer'd by J. M. and set down accordingly. But that which renders this Complaint without excuse, is, that there was scarce any thing said by G. G. that had any Relation to the Matter in Debate, which I have not published with the rest, as I could easily satisfy the Reader by comparing my Account of what pass'd at the Conference with G. G.'s exceptions. But 'tis not worth while.

To come now therefore to the main Subject of the present Controversy, (for many things I purposely omit; as in particular G. G.'s abusive reflexions which help to fill up almost every page) The Reader is to observe, that instead of tracing me step by step, and giving a distinct Answer to those several Arguments which I have urg'd in favour of Water-Baptism, G. G. has, after his own Fashion, summ'd up my Assertions under Four General Heads; (c) *not intending*, as he says, *to follow me in all my twisting Quibbles.* These twisting Quibbles (as he calls them) are my Syllogisms, which, why they were not to be meddled with, it may be no hard matter to guess. But be the Reasons what they will, the matter of Fact is confessed; and what G. G. intended, he has most punctually perform'd. For of all those Arguments which stand in Form in my Conference, he has not so much as attempted to shew any one to be defective, either in the Premises or the Conclusion. In short, all that he has done towards answering my Arguments for Water-Baptism, has been to muster up a few silly ones of his own and Barclay's together against it; notwithstanding which, he pretends that his Design was (d) *to give some further Reply to the Arguments of the Watry Priest*, as he calls me; and accordingly has given his Book the Title of *Christian Baptism Vindicated from the principal Objections of, &c.* Whereas there is not one Objection from which he has endeavoured to vindicate what he calls Christian Baptism; and therefore had his Design been answerable to what he has really perform'd, he should have said, that it was to cast a mist before the Eyes of the Ignorant, and endeavour to stifle the Evidence of those Arguments, to which he was not able, nor would so much as pretend to give a distinct and satisfactory Reply. But I will be more civil to G. G. than he has been to me; and his Arguments, such as they are, shall be fairly examined: Though, since he has not thought fit to follow me in my twisting Quibbles, I shall not think my self obliged to follow him in his own Method (which in truth is impossible) but in such Order as I judge to be most convenient; and that is this.

FIRST, I shall consider what G. G. has offered, to prove that Water-Baptism

(b) P. 7.

(c) P. 20.

(d) Pref.

is not the Christian Baptism, or That Baptism which Christ has enjoined to all Men as a Condition of Salvation.

SECONDLY, I will examine what he has said to shew, That the Baptism with the Holy Ghost is a Perpetual Baptism.

THIRDLY, whereas he says that I have (e) *trespassed greatly upon the Catechism of the Church of England*, I will prove that the Doctrine of Water-Baptism, as explain'd by me, is exactly agreeable to what the Church of England teaches concerning it.

I. I WILL consider what G. G. hath said to prove that Water-Baptism is not the Christian Baptism. I begin with that Text of St. Mark, Chap. 16. Ver. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.* This the Reader may remember, was the first Text alledged by me at the Conference to shew, that Water-Baptism is the Christian Baptism. The way by which I proved that it must be understood of Water-Baptism, was, by shewing that it cannot possibly be interpreted of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. How well G. G. has answered this Argument, will appear by and by under our Second Head. In the mean time it seems that he was then so quick-sighted, as to (f) *see instantly that this Text was on their side, as much as any they could have chosen for themselves*; which taken all together may be true enough, because I am persuaded that there is not one single Text, throughout the New Testament, that is on their side. We will however see, how he has now gone to work, to shew that this Text is on their side.

His first Argument is this; That the Baptism here spoken of as that which Saves, cannot be Water-Baptism, (g) *unless it could be proved, that all who are baptized with Water are therefore saved.* Which Argument stands upon this Foundation, viz. That the Baptism here spoken of is such a Baptism, as that whoever is baptized with it, will therefore be saved, i. e. such a Baptism as is singly, or of it self, sufficient to Salvation. Whereas on the contrary it is most evident, that the Baptism here spoken of, is not such a Baptism as is singly or of it self sufficient to Salvation. For to believe is a different thing from being baptized, and 'tis expressly asserted in the Text, that we must believe and be baptized too, before we can be saved. Had therefore G. G. a mind to have spoke Sense, he should have said thus: That since our Saviour has here promised Salvation to all those who Believe and are Baptized; therefore the Baptism here spoken of must be such a Baptism, as if joined with a sincere Belief, will be sufficient to Salvation; and then if he could have proved Water-Baptism not to be such a Baptism as this, his Conclusion would have been good. But I suppose G. G. saw that this was impossible to be made out, and therefore thought fit to go another way to work.

To make this matter plain to the most ordinary Capacity; Water-Baptism is an Ordinance appointed by Christ, as that whereby we are to be admitted as Members of his Church, and consequently is one Condition of our Salvation. But besides this, Christ has enjoined us another Condition to be performed, and that is, that we do believe, i. e. not only give our Assent to the Truth of such things as he has revealed to us, but to shew forth the Fruits of such a Faith in our Lives and Conversations. Now you know, that where a Promise is made upon two Conditions, both those Conditions must be performed before the Promise can take Effect. Wherefore since one Condition of Salvation is that we Believe; and another, that we be Baptized:

(e) P. 5.

(f) P. 8.

(g) P. 10, 11.

'Tis plain that as our being Baptized will not entitle us to Salvation without Believing, so neither will our Believing without being Baptized. This may be sufficient to show G. G. that our supposing Water-Baptism to be here spoken of, does by no means lay us under a necessity of Affirming, that all who are Baptized with Water are therefore saved. The Matter indeed is so very plain, that I had not said even this little, but in condescension to the Weakness of those with whom I have to do; and that I might show the Vanity of an Objection which is very common in the Mouths of our Ignorant Quakers. *Water-Baptism*, say they, *the Christian Baptism!* Why, dost think that sprinkling a little Water upon Peoples Faces will bring them to Heaven! Truly I think not. But I think that sprinkling Water upon Peoples Faces will bring them to Heaven, if they afterwards lead such Lives as Christians ought to lead. And I think on the other hand, that no Man has a right to Heaven by vertue of Christ's Promise, who is not Baptized. But what, must all the Quakers then be Damned! I do not say they must all be damned; They are in the hands of a merciful God who knows what to do with them. But I say they have no Title to Salvation, by the Conditions of the New Covenant, because they do not perform those Conditions; and let G. G. or any of his wiser Friends prove the contrary when they are able.

His Second Argument, if you will be so civil as to call it so, by which he would prove that this Text cannot be understood of Water-Baptism, stands thus. (b) "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, &c. Now observe (and 'tis worth any ones observing) is this Baptism with Water, or with the Spirit? To prevent mistakes, our Lord's following Words are to be considered, And these Signs shall follow them that believe; In my Name they shall cast out Devils; they shall speak with New Tongues; they shall take up Serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. Now until Henry Stebbing can prove that Water-Baptism is saving, and followed with these Signs, either literally or mystically, the same Text which he brings for his Proof, stands against him, confutes his Argument, and confirms our believing it was and is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit which saveth, and is Christ's Baptism." It seems, then, that because all those who are Baptized with Water cannot cast out Devils, speak with new Tongues, take up Serpents, drink Poyson, &c. therefore Water-Baptism is not the Christian Baptism! But I pray now, is it necessary that the Christian Baptism should always be followed by such Signs as these? If it be, then I grant that my Arguments for Water-Baptism will hereby effectually be Confuted. But how doth this confirm the Truth of the Quakers Opinion, viz. That Baptism with the Spirit is the Christian Baptism? Can they in vertue of their Spiritual Baptism cast out Devils, speak with new Tongues, take up Serpents, or drink Poyson? Why no; but George has a Salvo for that! These things, it seems, are to be done either literally or mystically! But how mystically? To cast out Devils, to speak with new Tongues, &c. are said to be Signs! Signs, Man, not whether a Person be truly Baptized or not, but Signs of the Truth, and Divine Authority of the Christian Religion! These were Miracles that were to be wrought by some of the first Believers, for the Confirmation of the Gospel. And could these be mystical? In short, Friend, thou art not a mystical but a literal Juggler; and therefore to avoid mistakes, and that we may know what thou wouldst have; be so kind, the next time thou findest a motion to write, as to let us know what these mystical Signs are. For instance; what 'tis to cast out Devils mystically; to speak with new Tongues mystically; to take up Serpents mystically; to drink Poyson mystically; to heal the Sick mystically, by laying on of Hands mystically. And when thou hast done this, 'tis possible that we may have as just pretensions to them as your selves.

(b) P. 23.

I DO not find that G. G. hath said any thing further upon this Text. I proceed therefore to another Argument whereby he has endeavoured to prove, that Water-Baptism is not the Christian Baptism; which, if it be possible, is worse than any of the former: (i) "If, says he, *Water-Baptism be saving, and the only means of incorporating into the Body or Church of Christ, how did it happen that as in* Mat. 3. 5. *Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the Region round about Jordan were baptized of John in Jordan, and also those that his Disciples Baptized, both while they were with him, and after they came to Jesus; and yet it appears by Josephus's Antiquities of the Jews, that most of them perished by a sore Destruction, and so few gathered into true Church-fellowship; as that it is said, Acts 1. 15. that the number of the Names were an hundred and twenty; and the Scriptures no where say that Water-Baptism saved one Soul of these, or any after them.*" It would tempt a grave Man to smile to hear such reasoning as this. That which I understand by it is, That because most of those who were baptized by *John Baptist*, and by his and our Saviour's Disciples, were destroyed with a sore Destruction, therefore *Water-Baptism* is not the Christian Baptism, or the Baptism which Saves. Which is as much as to say, that no Baptism can be the true Christian Baptism which is not fence against a Club or a Battle Ax. If this be so what will become even of Baptism with the Holy Ghost? Did not most of the Apostles who were certainly baptized with the Spirit perish also by a sore Destruction? But surely the Quakers want not to be told that the end of Baptism is to save Mens Souls not their Bodies! And that this is the proper effect of Water-Baptism is plain from the words of the Apostle, *Tit. 3. 5. He hath saved us by the Washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* And *1 Pet. 3. 21. Even Baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the Flesh, but the answer of a good Conscience towards God.*

BUT because the Quakers, and amongst the rest our Friend G. G. do contend that these two Texts are not to be understood of *Water-Baptism*, I shall in this place briefly consider them. As to the first, the Apostle has declared that we are saved by two things, viz. 1st, The Washing of Regeneration; and 2^{dly}. the Renewing of the Holy Ghost. Now I would desire to be informed what the Apostle means by *The Renewing of the Holy Ghost*? 'Tis plain (at least they will grant) that by it is meant that inward Influence or Operation of the Holy Ghost by which we are renewed in the Spirit of our Minds, i. e. by which we are Sanctified and raised up unto newness of Life. Now in the Opinion of the Quakers, those Persons who are thus renewed by the inward Operations of the Holy Ghost, are baptized with the Holy Ghost. Wherefore they must grant, according to their Principles, that the Apostle in these Words hath declared, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost is one thing by which we are saved, or one means of Salvation. Well: But what is that other thing by which also the Apostle here says we are saved, viz. *The washing of Regeneration*? 'Tis plain it must be some Baptism. But the Baptism with the Holy Ghost it cannot be, even allowing the Quakers Notion of that Baptism to be the true; because *the washing of Regeneration* is distinguished from that which the Quakers pretend is the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, viz. *The renewing of the Holy Ghost*. 'Tis evident even therefore according to the Principles of the Quakers themselves, That *the washing of Regeneration* must signify the Washing, or Baptism with Water; and consequently, that the Apostle does affirm in these Words; that Water-Baptism, and the Renewing of the Holy Ghost, are those two things by which we are saved; exactly answerable to that Saying of our Saviour, *John 3. 5. Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*

As to that other Text of St. Peter, you need only to consider the foregoing Words, to know to what sort of Baptism it belongs. For the Apostle at the 20th Verse had been speaking of *Noah's Ark*, wherein, says he, *a few, that is eight Souls, were saved by Water*, or rather * *through the Water*, or *out of the Water*, (for it was not the Water but the Ark that was the Instrument of Saving.) After which he immediately subjoins, *The like Figure whereunto, even Baptism, doth now save us*; where the Greek Phrase which we translate *the like Figure whereunto*, ought to be rendred † *the Antitype whereof*, which may signify *contrary* as well as *like* or *parallel* whereunto. Take it in this Sense, and the Text will be as full for Water-Baptism as possible. For then the meaning of the Apostle must be this, That whereas in the Days of *Noah* Men were destroyed by Water, on the contrary, now under the Gospel Men are saved by Baptism, *i. e.* by Water, for else the Antithesis will not hold. However this be, 'tis exceeding plain that the Apostle has in these Words made some sort of comparison between the Christian Baptism and *Noah's Flood*. But if the Christian Baptism be not Water-Baptism, what ground can there be for the Comparison? He might have said the like Figure whereunto, even Faith, or even Godliness, doth now save us, as well as even Baptism, if in Baptism there be no use of that from whence he took occasion to speak of Baptism, *i. e.* Water. But, says *Barclay*, (k) *the Apostle in this place doth seem especially to guard against those who (induced by this Comparison) might esteem Water-Baptism the true Baptism of Christ.* For he tell us, 1st, *Negatively, what it is not*, viz. *not a putting away the filth of the Flesh.* 2dly, *He tells us affirmatively what it is*, viz. *The Answer of a good Conscience towards God.* With him agree G. G. and his Friends, p. 12. where these very Words of *Barclay* are quoted. But how dogmatically do these Men assert that which ought to have been proved. I deny that the Apostle has affirmed either that Baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the Flesh, or that it is the Answer of a good Conscience towards God. For let his Words be considered. He first of all affirms of Baptism that it saves. *The like Figure whereunto, even Baptism, doth now save us.* Then it follows, *not the putting away of the filth of the Flesh, but the answer of a good Conscience.* Which Words ought in all reasonable Construction to be referred to the Verb *saves*, or *doth save*, immediately preceeding, rather than to the Substantive *Baptism*, which is more remote. If so, then that which the Apostle says, is not, that the putting away of the filth of the Flesh is not Baptism; nor yet that the Answer of a good Conscience is; but that the putting away of the Filth of the Flesh does not save, and that the Answer of a good Conscience does. Thus, I say, the Words may be interpreted; nay, they must be thus interpreted, because otherwise the Apostle must have asserted a Falshood; the answer of a good Conscience being no true Definition of Baptism, either according to the Quaker-Notion, or ours. That it is no true Definition, according to our Notion, which makes Baptism with Water to be the Christian Baptism, the Quakers do earnestly contend, and is indeed very evident. And that it is no true Definition, according to their Notion, which makes the Baptism with the Holy Ghost to be the Christian Baptism, may easily be proved. But there is no need to do this, because the *Quakers* themselves have confess'd it, by supposing the Answer of a good Conscience not to be the Christian Baptism it self, but the Effect or Consequent of it. (l) *How*, says G. G. *is this (i. e. this Answer of a good Conscience) EFFECTED, but by the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, and by that only?* To the same Purpose, *Barclay*, in the Place above quoted: *Now this Answer cannot be, but where the Spirit of God hath purify'd the Soul, and the Fire of his Judgment hath burnt up the unrighteous Nature; and those in whom this Work is wrought,*

* Δι' ὕδατος.

† Ὡς (or, as some Copies have it, ὅς) ἀντίτυπον. See Dr. Hammond.

(k) Apol. Prop. 10. §. 4.

(l) P. 12.

may truly be said to be baptized with the Baptism of Christ; i. e. of the Spirit, and of Fire. Where you see, that he makes the Purifying of the Soul, and the Burning up of the unrighteous Nature, (as he is pleased to express himself) to be the Baptism of the Spirit; and the Answer of a good Conscience, to be the Effect, or Consequent of this Baptism: For he says, that this Answer cannot be, but where the other is: Which implies, that the Baptism of the Spirit is the Cause, and only Cause of it. Now, since according to the Quakers own Concessions, the Answer of a good Conscience is not Baptism itself, but the Effect of it; it must be false to say, that Baptism is the Answer of a good Conscience; because Baptism, and the Effect of Baptism, are distinct Things, and cannot therefore be defin'd the one by the other. It is evident then, that what the Apostle has affirm'd of the Answer of a good Conscience, must be what has been before said; viz. That it saves; by consequence, what he has affirm'd of the putting away of the filth of the Flesh, must be, that it does not save: For the Connexion does plainly shew, that the very same Thing which is affirmed of the one, is denied of the other.

BUT this, perhaps you'll say, amounts to much the same Thing: For if the putting away of the filth of the Flesh does not save, it will follow, that the putting away of the filth of the Flesh (or an outward bodily Washing) is not Baptism; because it is expressly affirmed of Baptism, that it does save. But this Conclusion will by no means hold; for the whole Force of it lies in a supposed Absurdity, to wit, that the Apostle should in the latter Part of the Sentence, deny that of Baptism, which he has affirmed of it in the former. But certainly, St. Peter will not more contradict himself here, than St. Paul has, 1 Cor. 15. 10. where he says, *But I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.* This is exactly the same way of speaking; and the Meaning of the Apostle is plainly this, viz. That though indeed he himself did labour, yet he was not the only Labourer; but that the Grace of God did also labour with him. *I laboured; yet not I.* He corrects himself; lest any one should suppose that he ascrib'd that wholly to himself, which ought moreover, and more principally to be ascrib'd to the Grace of God. And thus we may, and ought to interpret the Words of St. Peter now before us. *Baptism saves us; yet not Baptism;* not the putting away of the filth of the Flesh, not the outward and bodily Washing only; † but also, and more principally, the answer of a good Conscience towards God. The Caution he here gives, is not, as Barclay supposes, directly to those, who, by the Comparison introduced in the foregoing Verse, might be induced to believe that Water-Baptism was the true Christian Baptism; but to those, who by his saying of Baptism that it saves, might be in danger of believing that the bare outward Washing, or Baptism alone, would be sufficient to save them, without that inward Purity of Mind which is signified by that Ceremony. And this, I suppose, no sober Christian ever did, or can affirm.

THE only Thing besides, that looks like an Argument against Water-Baptism, you have at p. 22. where G. G. tells us, that the Apostle (Paul) early saw the Weakness of that shadowy Baptism; and then cites 1 Cor. 1. 14. *I thank God, I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius, &c.* This Objection was put to me at the Conference; and though he pretends, (m) that *I did not then answer it, but with a needless Question; viz. How do you know that Water-Baptism is here spoken of?* yet if the Reader will but turn to my Conference, he will find that I did then answer him another way; as I have also done more fully, in my Remarks afterwards. Now methinks, a modest and ingenuous Man, would

† That the Words *not* and *but*, do in Scripture-Phrase frequently signify *not only* and *but also*, or more principally, is too plain to need any further Proof. See Dr. Bennet Conf. Quak. Chap. 24.
(m) P. 10.

not have insisted upon this Objection again, till he had examined and confuted what was there said, in order to take it off: Instead of which, G. G. has contented himself with saying, that I have *taken up near Three Leaves in my Book, to quibble off the Question.* This is his old Play again. Every Thing that he either does not understand, or does not like, he calls Quibbling; at which rate, a Child or a Fool may answer any thing. But if this be true, why did not G. G. or his Friends, expose these Quibbles? I dare say, they would have done it, if they could have told how. And therefore, the plain Truth of the Matter seems to be, that these Quibbles are plain and solid Answers, which they dare not to look in the Face, because they were not able to confute them.

I SHALL stay no longer upon this Head, than whilst I take notice of Two Things. The first is, G. G.'s persisting to defend that senseless Reply of J. M. to my Argument for Water-Baptism, drawn from *Mat. 28. 19. Go ye therefore, &c. viz.* That the Word *BAPTIZE*, might in that place literally signify Washing in Blood, as well as in Water. The Occasion of which Answer, was, my pressing him with a Quotation from *R. Barclay*; where he expressly contended, that this Text ought to be understood literally; which he proved from this Maxim; *viz. That we ought not to go from the literal Sense of Words, unless some urgent Necessity forceth us thereunto: But no Necessity forceth in this Place, &c.* Now, said I, if this Text must be understood literally, as *R. Barclay* says, it must be understood of Water-Baptism; because nothing else can be meant by Baptizing in a literal Sense, but Washing in Water. To this, as I before observed, J. M. very roundly reply'd, that it might signify Washing in Blood as well. This Reply of J. M. as absurd as it is, I say, our Friend G. undertakes to justify. And how? Why, by alledging these Two Texts; *viz. Rev. 1. 5. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own Blood. And Chap. 7. Ver. 14. These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.* But, did Christ wash us from our Sins by his Blood literally? Did those who came out of great Tribulation, wash their Robes, and make them white in the Blood of the Lamb, literally? Or was it possible for our Lord, to command his Disciples to go and wash all Nations in his, or any other Blood literally! I see plainly that these Men care not what they say.

THE next thing I shall take notice of is G. G.'s neat way of accounting for St. Peter's commanding the believing *Gentiles* to be baptized with Water, after they were actually baptized with the Holy Ghost; the History of which you have, *Acts 10. 48. (n)* Now, says he, *as to the Apostle Peter's commanding the believing Gentiles to be baptized with Water, after they had received the Holy Ghost, 'tis granted. But let us consider that there is a state of Infancy in Grace as in Nature; and Understanding was a gradual Gift to the Apostles as well as to others.* This is plain dealing, I confess. But it had been a little plainer if he had said (what his meaning most certainly is) that Peter did indeed believe that Water-Baptism was necessary, and for this Reason commanded the *Gentiles* to be baptized with it. But then Peter was mistaken, and wanted better Instruction, which were he now alive he might have from G. G. and his Friends. It is not much to be wonder'd at, that G. G. should fall into this Error, since his great Master *Barclay* has, though more modestly, asserted the same thing? † *Although*, says he, *it should be granted, that for a season they (the Apostles) were so far mistaken, as to judge Water to belong to Baptism, which however I find no necessity of granting, I see not any great Absurdity would hence follow: For 'tis plain they did mistake that Commission (i. e. the Commission to go and teach all Nations, &c.) as to a main part of it for a season, — since some time after they judged it unlawful to*

(n) Pag. 12.

† Apol. Prop. 12. § 9.

teach the Gentiles. Yea, Peter himself scrupled it, until by a Vision constrained thereunto; for which, after he had done it, he was for a season, until better informed, judged by the rest of his Brethren. The Force of which Argument lies here. St. Peter, and together with him the rest of the Apostles, actually were mistaken as to one Branch of their Commission, judging it unlawful to teach the Gentiles, notwithstanding they were by their Commissions authorized and commanded so to do. Therefore it was possible that they might be mistaken as to any other part of their Commission, and consequently suppose that the Baptism which they were commanded to administer to all Nations, was Water-Baptism, when in reality it was the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. A little after, he supposes this not only to have been possible, but really to have been the Case. For, says he, (speaking of Water-Baptism) *no wonder if Peter, that thought it so strange, notwithstanding all that had been professed before, and spoken by Christ, that the Gentiles should be made partakers of the Gospel*——was apt to put this Ceremony upon them. G. G. argues exactly after the same manner. For immediately after he had alledged, that Understanding was a gradual Gift to the Apostles, he gives this for an Instance: *Peter knew not that the Gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles, before it was shewn him by an extraordinary Vision*; plainly insinuating, that St. Peter administered Water-Baptism, through the like mistake, by which he thought that the Gentiles were not to have the Gospel preached to them.

LET us see a little how this Case stands. The Vision they talk of can be no other than that of the Sheet, Acts 10. which St. Peter saw immediately before he was sent by the Spirit to preach to Cornelius. But where do they learn that till then St. Peter did not think it lawful to teach the Gentiles? I am sure no such thing is expressly asserted, either in the Rehearsal of this Vision, or in any other place of Scripture: Nor do I clearly understand, by what way of arguing they would infer it. What seems most likely to be their meaning, and the most that can be said, is this, viz. That if St. Peter had known before that it was lawful for him to teach the Gentiles, he would have had no occasion of being taught it by a particular Vision; which Argument would have some Force in it, if it did appear that this was the Design and Purpose of the Vision. But this is not true; for the End of this Vision was only to shew, that the Wall of Partition, between the Jews and the Gentiles, was now broken down, and thereby to rectify a mistake which did at that time commonly prevail, viz. That it was not lawful to maintain a strict and intimate Familiarity, and particularly to eat, with any but those who were circumcised. For Proof of this, the Reader need only consider the Vision it self, together with the use St. Peter has made of it at the 28th Verse of the Chapter above quoted: where speaking to Cornelius, and those that were with him, he says, *Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a Man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another Nation*, i. e. (as the learned Dr. Hammond has Paraphrased) “Ye know that the Laws of the Jewish Religion permit not a Jew to converse * familiarly with any Gentile.” But God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. You see here that the Apostle concluded nothing from this Vision, but only this, viz. That the Distinction between Jew and Gentile was now wholly ceased, and consequently that it was lawful for him to converse or keep Company with both, with the same freedom and familia-

* The Original is καλλᾶς ἢ προσέρχου ἄλλοφύλου. By which words, (says Dr. Lightfoot) is not to be understood as if a Jew might have no dealing at all with a Gentile, for they might Walk, and Talk, and Traffick with them, and it was within a little of impossible to do otherwise, they living, exceeding many of them, in Heathen Cities, and Gentiles came continually in way of Trade to Jerusalem. But the unlawfulness of their conversing with the Gentiles, was conversing in near and more close Society, as the word καλλᾶς signifyeth, and that especially in these two things, viz. Not to eat with them, and not to go into their Houses. Lightf. Comment. in loc. op. Vol. 1. p. 844. I thought it necessary to make this Note, lest it should be thought that before this Vision St. Peter judged it unlawful to maintain any sort of Communication with the Gentiles; which if it were true, he must of course have thought it unlawful to teach them, because teaching implies some sort of Converse.

rity. Now 'tis very consistent to suppose, that St. Peter was ignorant of this; and yet at the same time very sensible, that it was not only Lawful, but his bounden Duty, in due Season, to preach the Gospel to the *Gentiles* as well as to the *Jews*. For to teach is one thing; to eat, drink, and use any other more familiar Converse, another; and consequently the unlawfulness of the latter, does by no means imply the unlawfulness of the former. There may therefore be a very good account given, why St. Peter was prepared to go to *Cornelius* by this Vision, without supposing him not to understand our Saviour's Commission. And indeed this Supposition is so very Extravagant, and attended with so many ill Consequences, that it would be more safe and more rational to let this Difficulty shift for it self, than to have recourse to such a way of solving it. St. Peter not know, before this Vision, that it was lawful to preach to the *Gentiles*! How is this possible? Did not our Saviour's Commission run, *Go ye and teach πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, all the Nations, i. e. all the Gentiles?* Were not the Apostles told expressly, that they were to be witnesses both in *Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth?* Were they not strictly enjoined to go εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα, into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every Creature? Were they not plainly informed that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in Christ's Name, εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, among all the Gentiles? Why, yes. But (if you will believe Barclay) the Education of the Apostles as *Jews*, and their Propensity to adhere and stick to the Jewish Religion, did so far influence them, that even after Christ's Resurrection, and the pouring forth of the Spirit, they could not receive nor admit the teaching of the *Gentiles*, though Christ in his Commission commanded them to preach to them. But 1st, How could the Education of the Apostles, as *Jews*, give them this Prejudice, when the *Jews* themselves never thought it unlawful to teach and instruct any sorts of Persons in the Principles of their Religion. Even the *Pharisees* were so far from scrupling this, that on the contrary they were, upon all occasions, very forward to, and diligent in it, compassing Sea and Land to gain Proselytes, as our Saviour testifies of them, *Mat. 23. 15.* It was indeed a general Opinion at that time among the Jewish Converts, that the Benefits of the Gospel did belong to none but those who either were or would submit to be circumcised and keep the Law. Whence it was that they were astonished, because that on the *Gentiles* also was poured out the Gift of the Holy Ghost, *Acts 10. 45.* And that God should grant to the *Gentiles* Repentance unto Life, *Acts 11. 18. i. e.* That those who were uncircumcised, should be vouchsafed the same Privileges with those who were circumcised. But that it was an unlawful thing to persuade the *Gentiles* to Embrace the Gospel, is what I am confident even the most exact amongst the *Jews* never did or could suppose. All that they scrupled was, as I said before, conversing familiarly, and particularly eating with such Men as these. And accordingly we may observe, that St. Peter's transgressing this Rule, was that, and only that, for which he was blamed by the Jewish Christians at *Jerusalem*, after he came from *Cornelius*. *Thou wentest in*, said they, *to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them*, *Acts 11. 3.* In this they thought St. Peter had done amiss, not in that he had taught them; for if they had, they would without doubt have blamed him for the one, as well as for the other. Again 2^{dly}, How strongly soever the Apostles may be supposed to have been prejudiced against Preaching to the *Gentiles* by the Prevalency of Education, our Saviour had before his Ascension taken sufficient care to remove this Prejudice. For I do not understand what he could have done more, than to tell them plainly and positively, that their Business was to go and preach to the *Gentiles*, as well as to the *Jews*: Which that he did do more than once, is evident from the Places that have been already cited, and what the Quakers dare not deny. Wherefore Barclay's affirming that notwithstanding all this, the Apostles could not receive nor admit the teaching of the *Gentiles*, is no better than supposing them to be void of common Sense; which if it be not most highly reflecting upon Almighty God, a Scandal upon the Apostles, and upon our Holy Religion

Religion in general, I leave to any reasonable Man to determine. I shall only say, that if the Case were thus with St. Peter, I do not understand what good Effect the Vision could have had upon him; for methinks a plain and express Injunction received from our Saviour before his Ascension, should weigh as much as any particular Vision afterwards. But *zally*, I shall add one Observation more, which will put this Matter beyond all Controversy; which is, that Fact shews St. Peter not to have been so very ignorant as these Men would make him. For it was this very Apostle who told the *Jews* long before this Vision happened, even at the Day of Pentecost, that *the Promise was to them and to all that were afar off*. From whence it is as plain as Words can make it, that in St. Peter's Opinion the Benefits of the Gospel were not to be confined to the *Jews*, but to be extended to all Nations universally; and consequently, that all Nations were to have the Gospel preached to them. Add to this, that before this Vision happened, the Gospel was preached to the *Samaritans* by St. Peter and others; which manifestly shews, that they understood our Saviour's Commission rightly. For it is to be observed, that our Saviour in his Life time, when he first of all sent forth the Twelve, gave them express Orders *not to go into the way of the Gentiles, nor to enter into any City of the Samaritans*, Mat. 10. 5. Here now the *Gentiles* and the *Samaritans* were upon the same foot; both excluded for a time from having the Gospel preached to them. Well, but how then did it happen, that notwithstanding this Injunction, the Apostles, within a little while after our Saviour's Ascension, did preach to the *Samaritans*? Why the Reason, I think, is very clear, *viz.* That our Saviour, before his Ascension, had enlarged their Commission, and expressly told them, that they were to preach the Gospel in *Samaria*, as well as in *Jerusalem* and *Judea*, Acts 1. 8. But this very Commission by which they were enjoined to preach to the *Samaritans*, did also as expressly enjoin them to preach to the *Gentiles*: Now that the Apostles should understand that part of the Commission which related to the former, and not that which related to the latter, a Man may indeed confidently assert, who is resolved to serve a Cause at any rate, but common Sense will not suffer him in earnest to believe. It would be ridiculous to alledge, that such a Thing might happen through the great Prejudice which the *Jews* had against the *Gentiles*; for the *Jews* had an equal Aversion to both these sorts of People, or if there was any difference, it seems to have been on the side of the *Samaritans*.

I HAVE been thus long in confuting this Notion of the *Quakers*, not for any weight that there is in the Argument by which they would establish it, but upon the account of its ill Tendency; and because it is made use of to support another so very scandalous, that even a *Deist* could not well have invented a worse, *viz.* That the Apostles, and particularly St. Peter, either might, or actually did, enjoin Water-Baptism as a Thing necessary, through Mistake, *i. e.* not understanding the true Nature of the Christian Baptism. Which Assertion, if any one can believe to be true, he may with equal Reason deny any one Article of the Christian Faith. I do insist upon it, and challenge any Man to deny it without *Blasphemy*, that the Holy Ghost, from his Descent at *Pentecost*, to the End of their Ministry, did constantly, and as Occasion required, inform the Apostles infallibly, in every particular that it was necessary for them to be informed in. Now I will put it to any one of common Sense, whether it was not necessary that the Apostles, from the very beginning of their Preaching, should have been informed, what Sort of Baptism it was they were to Administer? 'Tis evident that it was, because their Business from the beginning was to baptize those to whom they preached, and who were thereby converted to the Faith. Wherefore if the Apostles, at their very first Entrance upon their Office, had been under any false Notions concerning the Christian Baptism, the Holy Ghost, under whose immediate Influence and Direction they were, would undoubtedly have forthwith undeceived them, and consequently they

could not be mistaken in this Point, no not for a season. But in truth there was no manner of Occasion for the Holy Ghost to inform the Apostles what Baptism they were to Administer, because our Saviour had done it before. The Commission to *go and baptize all Nations*, was given by Christ in his own Person; the Apostles therefore even then must necessarily be supposed to have understood what it was to baptize; for our Saviour could not enjoin them to do they knew not what. Besides, the Apostles made Profelytes all the while during our Saviour's Ministry; and they baptized those whom they converted. And this Baptism which they administred before our Saviour's Death, was the same which they were commanded to administer after his Ascension; for we read of no Alteration. Was it possible then that the Apostles should all this while have not understood the true Nature of the Christian Baptism, when they practised it by our Saviour's Command, and were under his immediate Care and Inspection? Why yes; 'tis but for the *Quakers* to suppose either that our Saviour himself was for a Season, *i. e.* all his Life-time, mistaken in his own Baptism, or that the Apostles were more blind and untractable than even they themselves.

THE whole Matter in brief is this. *Understanding* was (as G. G. says) *a gradual Gift to the Apostles as well as to others*. That is, their Knowledge in Divine Things was not communicated to them all at once, but by degrees, as Occasion required, as it seemed meet to the Divine Wisdom to impart it to them. Thus, for Instance, the Apostles were not informed that the *Jewish* Law was abrogated by the Christian Institution, till the Time came that the *Gentiles* were to be called in; as is evident from the Case of St. Peter just now rehearsed. The Reason of which doubtless was, that the Apostles till then preaching wholly amongst those who had been already Circumcised, had no great Occasion to determine whether that and the rest of the Legal Rites were necessary or not. And besides, it might seem more fitting and convenient to the Blessed Author of our Religion, knowing the Obstinacy of that People, and their Tenaciousness of their ancient Customs, to suffer them in the Practice of them for a while, rather than to call them from them all at once, which might have given them an invincible disgust to the new Oeconomy which was now to be Established. But whatever the Reasons were, why it pleased God to conceal either this or any other Part of Christian Knowledge for a time, thus much is certain, *viz.* That there were some Parts of it, which we cannot without the utmost Absurdity, and the highest Reflection upon his Wisdom, suppose not to have been communicated to the Apostles, from their very first Entrance upon their Ministry; of this sort are all those Points, the Knowledge whereof was from the beginning ESSENTIAL to the Execution of the Apostolick Office. One of these Baptism most certainly was. For the Business of the Apostles was to *Preach to, and Baptize all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem, i. e.* preaching the Gospel first to the *Jews*. Now though it was possible for the Apostles to preach to and baptize the *Jews*, without knowing whether Circumcision and the rest of the *Jewish* Ordinances were designed to continue or not, yet 'tis plain that they could not possibly baptize the *Jews* or any else, without knowing what that Baptism was which they were to administer. The Apostles therefore could no more be ignorant what it was to baptize according to our Saviour's Institution, than they could be ignorant what it was to preach. Much less could they be ignorant of it so long as this Argument of the *Quakers* supposes. For it deserves well to be noted, that this Vision by which St. Peter was taught that the Distinction between *Jew* and *Gentile* was ceased, did not happen till the Year of Christ XL or thereabouts, which was VII Years after our Lord's Ascension. All this Time, it seems, the Apostles were ignorant, whether Water did belong to the Essence of the Christian Baptism or not; or rather, through Mistake, they had supposed that it did, and practised it accordingly. Nay for any thing we are told to the contrary, they were under this Mistake a great deal

deal longer; for they do not determine how long this State of Infancy in their Understandings lasted, and when it was that their Eyes began to be open'd. They only say in general, (which, by the way, we have only their Word for) *that they did not always remain under this Mistake*; and this they think (o) *sufficeth*. Well, let it suffice those whom it can suffice: The Apostles were at least under this Mistake, till after the Vision; for it was after the Vision, that St. Peter commanded *Cornelius*, and his Company, to be baptized with Water. That is to say, The Apostles had now for Seven Years been Preaching and Baptizing; in which Time, they had gone through *Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, i. e.* the whole *Jewish* Nation, and yet all this while had been Administring a wrong Baptism! What think you? Is not this a most goodly Notion? Does it not bespeak a strange Sort of Perverseness in these Men, that rather than give up a favourite Opinion, they scruple not to reproach the Apostles, and even the Spirit of God himself? Our Saviour, in his Life-time, promised his Apostles, that *the Comforter, whom the Father would send in his Name, should teach them ALL THINGS, and guide them into ALL TRUTH*. The Meaning of which, can certainly be no less than this; *viz.* That the Holy Spirit should, upon all Occasions, so influence and direct them, that they should be in no danger of being mistaken in any one Thing that it was necessary for them to know. But was our Saviour as good as his Word? Did the Comforter teach the Apostles all Things, and lead them into all Truth? No, say the Quakers, he did not! He fail'd them in one of the Essential Points of the Christian Knowledge! He suffer'd them for many Years to administer a wrong Baptism! Our Saviour commanded them, to go and baptize all Nations with the Holy Ghost: They, contrary to his Command, went, and baptized with Water; and all through mere Ignorance, and because they knew no better! Take notice, Friends, that ye now stand charged not only with Heresy, but with *BLASPHEMY*: Clear your selves from it, if you can.

I HAD like to have slipt over one Thing; which indeed, for any thing of Argument there is in it, might have been omitted, but upon the Account of the Falshood it contains, deserves to be animadverted upon. (p) Peter's Command, says G. G. in the place above quoted, (*i. e.* Act. 10. 48.) *doth not prove Water-Baptism to be necessary to Salvation, or to be a perpetual Standing Ordinance in the Church of Christ, any more than his compelling the Gentiles to be circumcised, Gal. 2. 14. proves the necessary Continuance of Circumcision*. This likewise he borrow'd from Barclay. (q) Why, says he, *doth Peter's commanding Cornelius to be baptized at that time, infer Water-Baptism to continue; more than his constraining, which is more than commanding, the Gentiles in general to be circumcised, and keep the Law?* Is it so, do ye say? Did St. Peter ever constrain, or compel the Gentiles in general to be circumcised, and keep the Law? Where did ye learn thus much? Barclay quotes no body for it, but leaves us to depend upon his Infallibility. G. G. is more civil, and refers us to Gal. 2. 14. Now Reader, pray turn to the Place, and admire at the Carelessness (if it be Carelessness) of these Men. The Case, as you will find, was no other than this: St. Peter coming down to *Antioch*, where St. Paul (the great Apostle of the Gentiles) was, did for a time converse freely with the Gentiles; v. 12. This, though (as has been before observ'd,) it was what the Jews esteem'd to be a Thing unlawful, was yet consonant to the Gospel-Liberty, which St. Peter had lately been acquainted with by the Vision, wherein he was taught to *call no man common or unclean*. But notwithstanding this, it seems, that upon the coming of certain Jewish Christians to *Antioch*, St. Peter, for fear of giving Offence to these, began to separate himself from the Gentiles; which Practice of his had such an Influence over the rest, that the other Jews *dissembled with him likewise, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their Dissimulation*; v. 12, 13.

(o) Barclay, ib.

(p) P. 12.

(q) Apol. Prop. 12. §. 9.

These Proceedings, if not timely prevented, might have been of ill Consequence, by bringing Men into an Opinion that the *Jewish* Law was still of Force; which *St. Paul* perceiving, *withstood St. Peter to the face*; and said, *If thou being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews; why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?* V. 14. As if he had said; "Thou hast hitherto eaten and conversed freely with the *Gentiles*; why then dost thou now separate thy self, and by this means compel (*i. e.* bring) the *Gentiles* to think it necessary for them to observe the Customs and Manners of the *Jews*?" This was the whole of the Case: From whence, 1st, I observe, That *St. Peter* did not compel the *Gentiles* in general, as *Barclay* has affirm'd: He compell'd only those *Gentiles*, with whom he conversed; *i. e.* the *Gentiles* at *Antioch*. 2^{dly}, I ask, How did *St. Peter* constrain, or compel the *Gentiles* at *Antioch*, to be circumcis'd and keep the Law? Did he command them? No: But, says *Barclay*, he did something more; for *Constraining is more than Commanding*: That is, if you can suppose that *St. Peter* seized them by main Force, bound them Hand and Foot, and circumcis'd them whether they would or not. But with *Robert Barclay's* Leave, the Constraint, or Compulsion which the Apostle made use of, was not only not more, but a great deal less than commanding. For he compell'd them no otherwise than by his own Example, as appears evidently from the Context. *St. Peter*, and the rest of the *Jews*, withdrew themselves from the *Gentiles*. The *Gentiles* observing this, and not knowing the Grounds upon which they did it, concluded with themselves, or at least were in danger of concluding, that the *Jewish* Law was still obligatory. This was what *St. Paul* call'd *Compelling*. So that if any among the *Gentiles* were actually compell'd, it was only by drawing a wrong Inference from *St. Peter's* Behaviour. Does not this now fall a great deal short of Commanding? Surely it does. For had *St. Peter* commanded the *Gentiles* to be circumcis'd, it must have been his Will and Desire that they should be circumcis'd; because a Command always implies a Desire of the Thing commanded: Whereas *St. Peter* might, by his Behaviour, give an Occasion to the *Gentiles* to think it necessary for them to be circumcis'd, and yet at the same time not have the least Intention to oblige them to any such Thing. But, 3^{dly}, Suppose *St. Peter* had even commanded (and, whatever *Barclay* says, I do not think he could have done more) the *Gentiles* at *Antioch* to be circumcis'd; how does this prove any thing against Water-Baptism? Why thus: If because *St. Peter* commanded the *Gentiles* to be Baptized, it follows that Water-Baptism is of perpetual Obligation, it will follow, because the same Apostle commanded the *Gentiles* to be circumcis'd, that therefore Circumcision is of perpetual Obligation. But this Argument will by no means hold: For the Reason why we believe Water-Baptism to be of perpetual Obligation, is not barely because it was once commanded, but because it was commanded as a Thing necessary, *i. e.* an Essential Branch of the Christian Institution; which is more than can be affirmed of Circumcision. For as to *St. Peter*, he could not possibly enjoin Circumcision to the *Gentiles* at *Antioch*, as a Thing necessary; because it had been determined but a little before at the Council of *Jerusalem*, (at which Council *St. Peter* was present, and gave his Opinion) that the Law of Circumcision was no longer of any Force. If therefore he did command these *Gentiles* to be circumcis'd, it was for the same Reason that *St. Paul* circumcis'd *Timothy*, viz. *because of the Jews*: And this (whatever *St. Peter's* Management in this Case was) is assign'd as the Reason of it, v. 12. of this Chapter; where 'tis expressly said, that *Peter* withdrew himself, *fearing them which were of the Circumcision*. The Quakers will tell us sometimes, that the Apostles enjoined Water-Baptism for the same Reason; and if they could prove this, they would do something. But I have, in my Conference, given several Reasons to shew the Vanity of this Objection; which Reasons, because *G. G.* has not been so civil as to take any notice of, I shall therefore be no farther civil to him, than to recommend them once more to his more serious Perusal.

II. AND thus much may suffice to have been spoken concerning the first Point; viz. what G. G. hath said, in order to prove that Water-Baptism is not the Christian Baptism. The Second Thing to be consider'd, is, What he hath said to prove, That Baptism with the Holy Ghost is a Perpetual Baptism. Under which Head, he has attempted to make out these Two Things; viz. 1st, That it ever was: 2^{dly}, That it ever is to be. Now, as to the former of these Propositions, the Reader is to observe, That herein he flatly contradicts what J. M. has already granted. For J. M. (as has been seen) did grant, That the Baptism with the Holy Ghost did not commence till the Day of Pentecost; whereas this Man has given it as his Judgment, That (r) *there never was a Prophet, or a Righteous Man since the Creation of the World, but who was washed and sanctified by the Baptizing Power of the Holy Ghost; i. e. who was not baptized with the Holy Ghost.* Is it not now a very strange Thing, that these Men, who are at every turn cracking of their Inspirations, should, in a Point of Doctrine wherein they are press'd by their Adversaries, thus foully contradict one another? Surely, George, the Spirit forsook either thee when thou wert writing, or J. M. when he was disputing! — But I shall leave J. M. and you to agree upon this Point between your selves, and turn to your Arguments. Now in order to shew that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost ever was, G. G. hath produced several Texts of Scripture in which the Gifts of the Holy Ghost are spoken of, as having been dispensed to several Persons in all Ages. Thus it is said of Simeon, that (s) *the Holy Ghost was upon him*; of John Baptist, that he (t) *should be filled with the Holy Ghost*; of Elizabeth and Zacharias, that they were (u) *filled with the Holy Ghost*; of David, that the Holy Ghost (x) *spake by his Mouth*. Lastly, He quotes the Apostle St. Peter, affirming in general, that (y) *of old time, holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*. Whence he concludes, that the Gifts of the Holy Ghost were dispensed long before Pentecost, even in all Ages. For, says he, (z) *Doubtless Abraham, the Friend of God, was honoured with that Gift; as also Enoch, Noah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Caleb, Joshua, and a Cloud of Holy Ancients.* Now what Pains has this Man taken to prove that which no body denies! Did I ever say, that the Gifts of the Holy Ghost have not been dispensed in all Ages? Why, yes; if any Credit is to be given to what G. G. has said. For, says he, (a) *Although it was said, Joh. 7. 39. The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified; is it safe to conclude from these Words, that it was given to none in any degree, till Jesus was ascended?* And again, a little after: He (i. e. St. John) *did not express himself in such a restricted Sense, as to say, that the Holy Ghost was not as yet given to any, till he (Christ) was ascended; for it appears to the contrary, from divers Places of Scripture.* And then he immediately quotes those Texts, which have been already referr'd to. This is a very plain Insinuation, that I have concluded that the Holy Ghost was given to none in any degree, till Jesus was ascended; than which, there cannot any Thing be more false. For I have declared in express terms, (b) *that the Assistances of the Spirit working Faith and Obedience, are Gifts which Men have had in all Ages.* But what of all this? Does it follow from hence that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost has been dispensed in all Ages? Why so G. G. seems to think; For thus and only thus he argues, (c) *How come holy Men to be such, but by the Sanctification of the Holy Ghost? Doth the Holy Ghost sanctify any Man without washing him, making clean his Heart? Can any be thus washed, and not baptized, which is all one?* And then having quoted some Texts of Scripture, where there is mention made of washing, or being washed from Sin, he concludes, *What can be more clear, than that there was a washing or baptizing, cleansing, sanctifying Gift of the Holy Spirit, or Ghost, in all the former Dispensations? Surely our Opponent's Memory mightily failed him, when he construed John's words so pervertingly to make them*

(r) P. 11.

(s) Luk. 2. 25, 26.

(t) Luk. 1. 15.

(u) Luk. 1. 31, 67.

(x) Act. 1. 16.

(y) 2 Pet. 1. 21.

(z) P. 26.

(a) P. 24, 25.

(b) Conference, p. 26.

(c) P. 26, 27.

serve his Assertion, That no one was baptized with the Holy Ghost before the Day of Pentecost. No George, the failure is not in my Memory, but in thy Understanding. That there was a Sanctifying Gift of the Spirit in all the former Dispensations is true; and that those who were by such Gifts as these actually Sanctified or made Holy, might in some Sense be said to be cleansed, washed, and, if you will, baptized with the Holy Ghost, I do not deny; (although that such Persons, or any other, were ever said to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, before our Saviour's Ascension, I do not find;) but it does not therefore follow, that those who were thus Sanctified by the Holy Ghost, were Baptized with the Holy Ghost, in that Sense wherein our Saviour used that Phrase, when he promised it to his Disciples under the New Testament. The Reason is, because when any Term is used in a figurative Sense (as most certainly the word Baptism is, when applied to the Spirit as the Matter of it) it will admit of as many different Significations, as there are different Things which bear any Resemblance to that which the Word doth properly and literally express. Now the Question between the Quakers and Us, is not what may in any Sense be called Baptism with the Holy Ghost, but what was actually called so by our Saviour, when he said, *John truly baptized with Water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost*; and by *John Baptist*, when pointing to *Jesus*, he said, *This is he who baptizeth, or shall baptize with the Holy Ghost*. This I say is the Question; because it is upon these Promises, and no other, that the Quakers found their Doctrine, viz. That the Baptism with the Holy Ghost is the Christian Baptism; and consequently it can be of no manner of Advantage to them, although it be granted, that those Gifts of the Spirit which have been dispensed in all Ages, might, upon the account of some resemblance that there is between the Sanctification wrought by them, and a literal Washing, be termed the Baptism of the Holy Ghost; unless it can be proved, that such Gifts were particularly intended by our Saviour in that Promise. This therefore is what G. G. should prove, if he would say any thing to the Purpose; but this is impossible to be proved. For let the Quakers pretend what they will, that which our Saviour and *John Baptist* spake of under the Name or Appellation of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was not only peculiar to the Gospel Dispensation, but was not given before our Saviour's Ascension. This I have, in my Conference proved by such plain Texts of Scripture, that I think it cannot bear any further Dispute. G. G. has not taken notice of so much as one of these Texts, but slyly slipt them over as he has every thing else that is of any Importance; he was afraid, it may be, of being (d) imposed upon, as he says *J. M.* was, i. e. that they should be so very full and conclusive of what they were brought to prove, that he should be forced to yield it up whether he would or no, and then he would have been quite spoil'd for writing Vindications. In the mean time, till he can prove those Texts to be inconclusive, he does but face down the Scriptures, if he says, as he said, p. 11. *That there never was a Holy Prophet, or Righteous Man, since the Creation of the World, but who was baptized with the Holy Ghost*. For the Disciples of Christ in his Life-time were doubtless good Men, and so were many of *John's* Disciples; and yet 'tis as clear as any thing can be, that none of these were baptized with the Holy Ghost. *John* declares plainly, that he did not baptize with the Holy Ghost; Christ promises this Baptism to his Apostles as a thing future, a little before his Ascension, *Ye SHALL be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence*. Now from this Consideration it will follow, 1st, That the bare partaking, or being cleansed by the Sanctifying Gift of the Spirit, cannot be what our Saviour promised under the Name of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost; for these Gifts the Disciples of *John*, and our Saviour in his Life-time, were endued withal, and were thereby Sanctified. 2^{dly}, Neither can the bare par-

(d) P. 11.

taking even of the extraordinary or miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, be what our Saviour meant by the Baptism with the Holy Ghost; for these likewise the Disciples of Christ were possessed of before his Ascension. But what then, you'll ask, is the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, if the partaking neither of the ordinary nor the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost be it? Why, G. G. has by great chance stumbled upon it at p. 25. though he does not know it, where he observes and very well, *That though it was said that the Holy Ghost was not yet given, we are not to infer from thence, that it was not given to any in any degree till Jesus was ascended, but that it was not given SO PLENTIFULLY, as it was after Christ was ascended.* Now had G. G. made use of this Observation, and consider'd the whole Matter with that Care and Impartiality which he ought, he must, if his Judgment had not mightily fail'd him, have concluded, that what our Saviour and the Baptist spoke of under the Name of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was that great and plentiful Effusion of the † extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, which Christ was to vouchsafe to his Church after his Ascension; and that the Apostles partaking of this great and plentiful Effusion, by being endued with the Gift of Tongues, and many other extraordinary Endowments, did partake of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and thereby became baptized with it.

THIS Notion being once admitted, my Assertion that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost *was confined to the Apostles Days, i. e.* began after our Saviour's Ascension, and ended with the Apostles, stands firm and immoveable. For as it is certain that the Church of God was never in any Age before blessed with such a plentiful Effusion of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost: So 'tis evident that neither has the Christian Church enjoyed such a plentiful Measure of the Gifts of the Spirit, since that great and remarkable Effusion ceased, which most certainly it did during the Apostolick Age, *i. e.* before, or at least immediately after the Death of all the Apostles. St. John, who was the last of them, died not till the Year of Christ C, by which Time the extraordinary Presence of God's Spirit with his Church, which had for some time before been gradually decaying, was in a manner wholly removed, there being now no farther Occasion for it. For the Ends of this extraordinary Presence of God's Spirit, were to give Testimony to the Truth and Divine Authority of the Christian Religion, and to qualify the Apostles and others to preach the Gospel to all Nations; both which Purposes by this time had been very fully and effectually answered. 'Tis true indeed, (as G. G. hath observed) that our Saviour hath promised to be with his Church *always, even to the end of the World*; and has told us that *the Comforter was to abide with us for ever.* Accordingly there can be no Question, but the Sanctifying Gifts or Graces of God's Spirit, have and will be dispensed to Christians in all Ages. This G. G. has taken great pains to prove, p. 27, 28, 29. where he has heaped together abundance of Scripture Proofs to shew, as he expresses himself, *the Perpetuity of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, and virtuous cleansing*; which is the chief of what he hath said to demonstrate, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost ever was to be. But all this is nothing to the Purpose: For how does it follow, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost ever is to be, because the Sanctifying or Cleansing Gifts of the Spirit ever are to be; any more than it follows, that because the Sanctifying Gifts of the Spirit always have been dispensed, therefore the Baptism with the Holy Ghost ever was? The latter of these Conclusions I have already shewn to be weak and insufficient, by proving that those Sanctifying Graces of God's Spirit, which were dispensed before our Saviour's Ascension, could not be what our Saviour meant by the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. The former Conclusion must therefore be as weak, unless G. G.

† I say the Extraordinary Gifts, 'because I do not find that any but such are any where in Scripture stiled Baptized with the Holy Ghost. See Dr. Bennet Confut. Quak. Chap. 18.

can prove, that these Sanctifying or Cleansing Gifts which are, and always will be dispensed, are what our Saviour means by the Baptism with the Holy Ghost; which as yet I do not find he has so much as attempted. And indeed it will be to no purpose to attempt any thing of this kind, 'till he has overthrown that Notion of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, which has been already laid down. For if that which our Saviour meant by the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, be *that extraordinary Presence of the Spirit which God did vouchsafe to his Church in the beginnings of the Gospel, in order to the first general Establishment of the Christian Religion*, 'tis plain that no Man in these Days can make any just Pretensions to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, (in our Saviour's Sense of that Phrase) by vertue of any Gifts or Graces of the Spirit whatsoever.

THERE is indeed one Text which G. G. has taken notice of, (and that is the only one) that seems to afford some colour for extending the Baptism with the Holy Ghost to all Ages. I mean the Words of St. Peter, who preaching to the *Jews* and those other *devout Men out of every Nation under Heaven*, concerning the Effusion of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost at *Pentecost*; and telling them, that this was the Accomplishment of our Saviour's Promise, says, *The Promise is to you and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call*, Acts 2. 39. In Answer to this Argument; I must desire my Reader to look back to Verse 17, 18. of the same Chapter from whence this Text is quoted, where he will find a Prophecy of *Joel*, cited by the Apostle upon the very same occasion. *This*, says he, *is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesy, and your young Men shall see Visions, and your old Men shall dream Dreams, &c.* Do but observe here the Extent of these Terms in which this Prophecy is expressed. I will pour out my Spirit *upon all flesh*; your *Sons and your Daughters* shall Prophesy. And yet it is evident as well from the Nature of the Gifts here mentioned, as from several other Circumstances, that this Promise was by no means either universal or perpetual, but limited to that particular Period of Time between the Beginning of the Gospel, and the End of the *Jewish* State. It cannot therefore be inferred, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost was to be perpetual from hence, *viz.* That the Promise is said to belong to them and to their Children; any more than it can be inferred, that the Gift of Prophecy was to be perpetual, because it was promised to their Sons and Daughters, *i. e.* to their Children. And as to the Universality of the Promise, it seems to be plainly limited in the very words of the Text. For it is not said absolutely, it should be fulfilled upon all; but upon all, *even as many as the Lord should call*. Wherefore the Sense of the Apostle seems to be this; That the Promise of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was not limited to any particular Nation or People, as many of God's Promises before had been; but did belong to all Nations, out of which God would chuse such Persons, as should to him seem most proper, and pour upon them the same Gifts, which they then saw poured forth upon the Apostles and others. And this was exactly verify'd in those early Days: For some Persons, out of every Nation under Heaven where the Gospel was planted, had some one or more of these extraordinary Gifts bestowed upon them.

I HAVE said enough, I think, to answer all those Arguments, by which the *Quakers* have endeavour'd to prove, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost is a Perpetual Baptism; and withal, to wipe off that Aspersions which G. G. and his Brethren have cast upon me; *viz.* That *I have limited the cleansing Gift of the Holy Ghost to One Generation*. For it appears, by what has been said, that what I have limited to One Generation, is not the cleansing or sanctifying Gift of the Holy Ghost, but that which our Saviour and *John Baptist* spoke of, under the Name of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost; which I have all along supposed

posed (and I hope proved) to be somewhat very distinct from those Gifts or Graces, by which Men are sanctify'd or made holy. But if I have not proved this, my bare supposing it, is enough to clear me from this Calumny: For if I do suppose the Baptism with the Holy Ghost is something distinct from those Gifts or Graces by which Men are sanctify'd or made holy; it cannot be infer'd from my denying the former to be perpetual, that I deny the latter to be so likewise.

III. AND now, I hope, little needs be added upon the Third Point; *viz.* To reconcile the Doctrine of Baptism, as explain'd by me, with the Doctrine of the Church of *England*. For the only Ground of G. G's. charging me with Contradicting the Church of *England*, and all other Protestant Churches upon this Point, is, my Arguing (as he supposes) for the Use of Water, exclusive of the Spirit? *i. e.* as he explains himself, My (e) *holding, that Water, without the Holy Spirit, is sufficient to wash Souls from Sin, and consequently to save them.* Accordingly G. G. has fill'd about Two Pages in his (f) Book, with Passages cited from our Liturgy and Church-Catechism, wherein the Necessity of being regenerated by the Spirit, is either supposed, or expressly asserted, in Opposition to me, whom he pretends to have denied it. I was willing enough to have supposed that this might be only a mistake of G. G. and his Friends, occasioned by their not taking notice of the Distinction I always made between being baptized with the Holy Ghost, and being regenerated by the Holy Ghost: But, upon Second Thoughts, I can see no Room for this Charitable Supposition. For those who will but take the Pains, just to run over my Conference, will find enough said, to secure any one from drawing such an Inference as this, unless it be those who are resolv'd to draw it, whether there be any Ground for it or not. At P. 9. where J. M. urged that Text of St. Paul, Rom. 8. 9. *Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;* I expressly declared, *That no one can be a living Member of Christ's Church, who does not partake of the Gifts or Graces of God's Spirit.* And there it was that I made the Distinction between being baptized with the Holy Ghost, and being regenerated by the Holy Ghost. All this G. G. could take notice of. For, speaking of the Reformed Churches, he saith, (g) *They do not affirm Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and Regeneration, to be Two distinct Things.* And again; (h) *Where is the Advantage of this Rector's Learning, that he boasts of; affirming, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and Regeneration, are Two distinct Things?* This shews plainly, I say, that G. G. took my Distinction right: And who, but those who are wilfully blind, must not have seen by this Distinction, that it is my Opinion, that this Regeneration, or inward new Birth, is necessary to Salvation, as well as the outward Washing with Water? And yet notwithstanding these plain and express Declarations to the contrary, the Man has the Assurance to tell me, that I have *argued for the Use of Water, exclusive of the Spirit!*

BUT does not our Church's Teaching that the Regeneration of the Spirit is perpetual and necessary, prove it to be the Doctrine of our Church, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost is perpetual and necessary? Not in the least; unless it could be proved to be the Doctrine of our Church, that this Regeneration is the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. But this cannot be proved. For though it be true what G. G. says; *viz.* That our Church (i) *does not affirm, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and Regeneration, are Two distinct Things; nor yet deny, that by having the Spirit, Men are baptized with the Holy Ghost;* yet it is also false what he affirms elsewhere, *viz.* That it does (k) *attribute the Essential Means of Salvation to the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, by the Water of Regeneration:* Or, as he says a little after, *That the Church-Belief shews, that the Spirit's*

(e) P. 36. (f) P. 33, 34. (g) P. 32. (h) P. 35. (i) P. 32. (k) P. 34.

Baptism and Regeneration are one. That it does attribute Salvation to the outward Washing with Water, and the inward Sanctification of the Spirit, I grant. But then, whether this inward Sanctification of the Spirit is, or is not the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, in the Scripture Sense of that Phrase, our Church has not (that I know of) any where determin'd. It is true, we are exhorted in the Office of Publick Baptism, to *call upon God*, that the Persons to be Baptized, *may be baptized with Water, and with the Holy Ghost*. This G. G. has taken notice of; and would (I suppose) infer from thence, that it is the Doctrine of our Church, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and Regeneration, are one and the same Thing. But this Consequence does by no means follow. For if it be supposed, that the Compilers of our Liturgy did not think Regeneration to be the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, in the Scripture-Sense of that Phrase; there will still be Resemblance enough between Regeneration and a Proper Washing, to warrant the Use of that figurative Expression: And 'tis by no means necessary, that when a Scripture-Phrase is made use of, it must always be used exactly in the same Sense wherein the Scriptures have used it. Besides, supposing that it was the Opinion of those who compiled our Liturgy, that Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and Regeneration, are one and the same Thing; what is this to me? Am I bound to subscribe to every private Opinion which those Men had? I must know a Reason for it, e're I do. Had our Church made this Doctrine an Article of Conformity, something might be said. But this it has not done; there being nothing either in the Canons, Articles, or Publick Offices, which does oblige me either to believe my self, or teach it to others, that those ordinary Gifts of God's Spirit, by which Men are regenerated, are what the Scripture means by the Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

I HAVE said enough, I think, to answer G. G's Book. Would I have taken notice of every thing, I might have said a great deal more. But it may be thought perhaps that I have indulged him too far already; and I should be of the same Opinion my self were not the Principles of these Men more formidable than his Defence of them; which must be my Apology for giving the Reader this trouble.



A
SECOND
DEFENCE
OF THE FOREGOING
ACCOUNT,
AND OF THE
DOCTRINE

OF
WATER-BAPTISM:

IN ANSWER TO THE

OBJECTIONS

OF

JOSEPH MIDDLETON.

By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.

Written in the Year, 1716.

SECTION D
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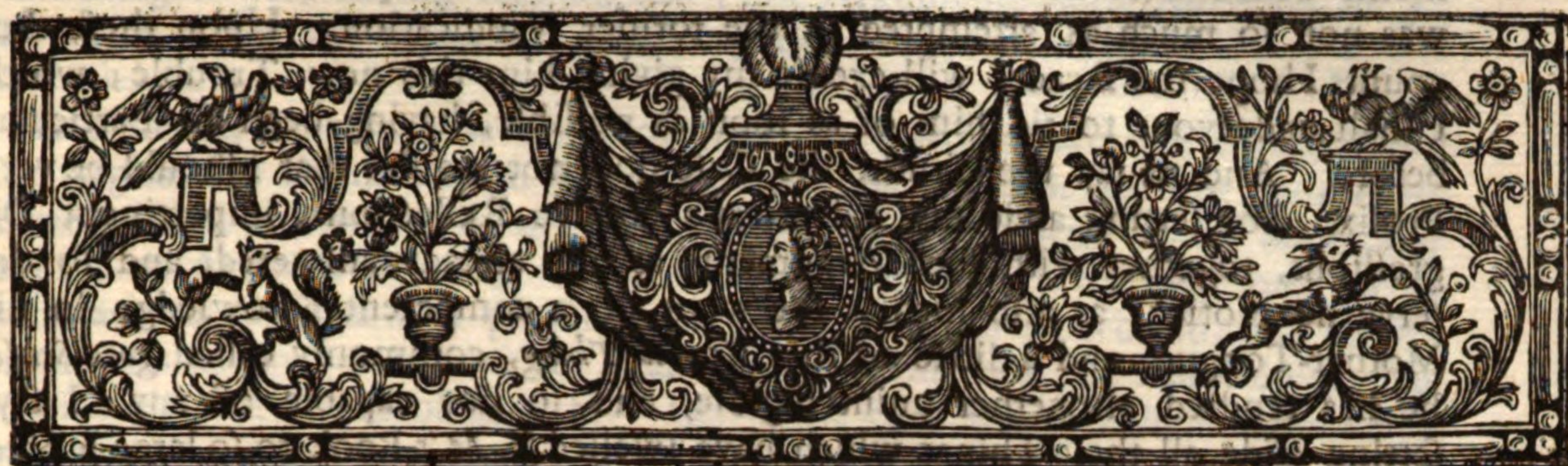
OBJECTIONS

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Written in the Year 1716.



A N
A N S W E R
T O
JOSEPH MIDDLETON'S
VINDICATION.

WHEN I had published my Reply to G. G.'s Answer to my Account of the Conference, &c. I was in hopes that I had thereby discharged my self from all farther Trouble in Relation to that Controversy. But I perceive I am call'd to it once more by another Answer to the aforesaid Account, which has since been published by J. M. himself. Indeed I always look'd upon J. M. to be the properest Person to pursue the Dispute against me; and could I have been assured that he would have done so, I had not cared how long I had waited his Motions. But a Year and more being passed since the Account of the Conference was made publick, and the Quakers having attempted a Vindication of themselves by other Hands, I thought (as I reasonably might) that this was all the Answer that was intended, and so without any farther Delay set my self to the Writing of a Reply to it. And now though it has happened contrary to my Expectation, that J. M. has at last ventured upon the Management of his own Cause, I would not have my Reader suppose that all that has been said in my former Reply has been to no Purpose. For upon perusing what J. M. has offer'd, it will appear that G. G. has been before-hand with him in some plausible Arguments; by which means a great part of his Book stands, as I hope, already confuted. Besides, I shall hereafter shew that G. G.'s Book ought probably, to be esteem'd the Quakers Answer rather than J. M.'s; which if true, whatever it be in it self, it deserved the most distinct and particular Examination. But whether this be so or not, 'tis not now Material to enquire; the Book is answered; and if I am not grudged the Trouble of reading the Reply, it shall not repent me of the Pains I have taken in Writing of it. And as to this of J. M. I think my self obliged to take notice of it for these following Reasons, *viz.* 1st, Because he being the Person with whom the Debate was held, it may be expected that I should. 2^{dly}, Because he has taken upon him to charge me with Falshood and Insincerity, in representing the Conference; a Thing which G. G. and his Friends were so honest as not to pretend to. 3^{dly}, Because he has shewn some Inclination to give a direct Answer to those Arguments

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ments which were then offered in Defence of Water-Baptism, which likewise was not so much as attempted in the former Vindication. Upon these Accounts I hope the Reader will excuse my giving him this new Trouble; which I shall endeavour to rid him of as soon as possible, having been so Particular before. And to say the Truth, the Case does not require that I should be very Prolix. For setting aside my Adversary's abusive Reflections, impertinent Digressions, together with such Arguments as are already answered, and so deserve no Notice; as also such as for want of a competent Knowledge in his Mother-Tongue, and a little of that *Carnal Thing*, commonly called *good Sense*, he has rendered altogether unintelligible, and so not capable of any: I say, setting aside all these Things which have swelled J. M.'s Book to so large a Size, the Answer may be brought to so reasonable a Compass, as may, I hope satisfy my Reader without cloying him.

I BEGIN with the Charge of Falshood, which is Twofold; viz. 1st, That I have omitted several of J. M.'s Arguments against me. 2^{dly}, That I have also omitted and misrepresented several of his Replies to my Arguments against him. Now as to the First, the Reader is to take Notice, that the Chief of those Arguments which I am charged with having omitted, are set down together under Five Articles, in a Schedule at the End of the Book, which is attested by a Certificate subscribed by Five Quakers.

THE Title of the Schedule runs thus: *Some few of the Arguments and Answers, among more, spoken in the said Conference, that are TOTALLY omitted in the Priest's Book and his Amanuensis's Minutes, either through Design or Forgetfulness.*

I WOULD, if I could, suppose that it was through Forgetfulness, or something of that Kind, that these Articles were drawn up and attested. But this is hardly to be supposed; for pray observe,

I AM charged with totally omitting, IMPRIMIS, *My own Assertion*, viz. *That Water-Baptism is an Ordinance of Christ, Essential to Salvation, as that without which none can be saved, yet not sufficient of it self without the Spirit's Assistance; Which is by much too gross a falshood to want to be exposed.* The Third Article contains as great an Untruth. For there I am charged with omitting this Argument of J. M.'s, viz. *That if Baptism with Water had been sufficient for the very Apostles themselves, then would there have been no Necessity of their being baptized with the Spirit. But there was a Necessity; therefore, &c.* Which Argument I have expressly set down in my Account in these Words; *J. M. in particular, started an Objection against Water-Baptism, viz. That if the Apostles had look'd upon Baptism with Water to have been sufficient without the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, how came it to pass that so many were baptized with the Holy Ghost? &c.* And what is still more wonderful, J. M. has repeated this very Question in his Book, together with my Answer to it! The former Part of the Fourth Article is much of the same Stamp, only the Falshood lies a little more concealed. There I am charged with totally omitting another of J. M.'s Arguments, viz. *As Water washed the outward Man, so doth the Spirit (i. e. the Baptism of the Spirit, for this is what he means) wash the Souls and Consciences of Men; the first being a Sign, the latter the Thing signified; the first abolished by the Sufferings of Christ, who nail'd the Hand-writing of Ordinances to his Cross; the latter then established or instituted by him, i. e. to be perpetual.* This these Men are pleased to call one of J. M.'s Arguments, and so I suppose they will call every thing which J. M. said. But certainly they could not be so blind, as not to see that this is no more than a good round Assertion, the Substance whereof is in short this: *That Water Baptism was abolished by the Sufferings of Christ, and the Baptism with the Holy Ghost appointed in its stead.* This therefore

therefore is in effect, that which I am here charged with having omitted; *i. e.* I am charged with having omitted that (not Argument, but) Assertion of *J. M.* which it was the whole design of my Book to overthrow!

AND thus it appears, that Three of these Five Articles are direct Falshoods; The Arguments mentioned in the Two remaining Articles, are not indeed to be met withal any where in my Narrative; And what then? Did I undertake to give an Account of every thing which *J. M.* said? No; but only of so much as was material and pertinent to the Points then debated, and to the Arguments which I made use of against him. This was all I promised, and I think all that I was obliged to. Let us see then whether these Arguments be pertinent or not.

THE Omissions are as follows, *viz.* 1. This Argument of *J. M.* *If the Church of Christ be a Spiritual House to God, and the Members thereof lively Stones therein, then is there a Necessity of the Spirit's Baptism to make them such. But, &c.* 2. *J. M.'s Proof that the Name signifies the Power and Virtue of Christ, drawn from John 14. 26. and Acts 3. 6. 3. His Proofs of Christ's Baptism with the Holy Ghost, from Mal. 3. 1, 2. and Mat. 3. 11.* I must first of all observe to you, that I have been before-hand with *J. M.* in charging my self with one of these Omissions; and that is his Proof (as he calls it) that *the Name* signifies *the Virtue and Power of Christ.* I say, I have taken Notice of this Omission in my Account, and assigned this particular Reason for it; *viz. That whether to baptize in the Name signifies to baptize into the Power, or any Thing else, the Argument I then used would be the very same.* For the rest, that the Reader may judge whether they be material and pertinent or not, I shall consider, 1st, What they are in themselves; and, 2^{dly}, What they are with Respect to those particular Ends or Purposes, to which they were applied at the Conference. As to the First, *viz.* The intrinsic Weight of these Arguments, it is in truth just nothing. The Church is a Spiritual House and therefore Men must be made Members thereof by a Spiritual Baptism, *i. e.* by the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. All this is as plain as can be; that is, if you will be so civil as to accept of Sound in the Room of Sense; for otherwise I think I may challenge any Man upon Earth to find out where the Force of it lies, unless he be such as *J. M.* and his Friends, who have abused their Understandings to that Degree, that they can see the Force of an Argument every where but where it is. Suppose I should say, that because the Church is an outward and visible Society, therefore Men must be made Members thereof by an outward and visible Baptism; *i. e.* by Water-Baptism: would not one conclusion be as good at least as the other? The Argument drawn from *Mal. 3. 1, 2.* is ridiculous. The Prophet speaking of Christ, says, that he should be *like Refiners Fire, and like Fullers Soap; i. e.* that he should thoroughly purge or cleanse his Church. Well! And what then? Why therefore, I suppose, the Baptism with the Holy Ghost was to be perpetual! That is, if any Thing proves any Thing; for he might have quoted the first Verse in *St. Luke's Gospel*, and it would have done every whit as well. The Text of *St. Matthew*, Chap. 3. v. 11. is indeed somewhat more to the Purpose; but it proves neither the Baptism with the Holy Ghost to be perpetual, nor that Water-Baptism is abolished. The *Baptist* says of himself, that he *baptized with Water*; but he does not say but that Christ was to baptize with Water too: He says that Christ should *baptize with the Holy Ghost*; but he no where says, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost was to continue for ever.

I MIGHT have been a great deal more large in exposing the Weakness of these Arguments; but by the help of these short Hints I think they may be very safely trusted with the most ordinary Capacity. But for the further clearing my self from this Charge, let us consider, 2^{dly}, What these Arguments are, with Re-

spect to those particular Ends or Purposes to which they were applied at the Conference, which indeed is by far the most material Enquiry. For to say the Truth, the bare Insufficiency of these Arguments was no good Reason why they should be omitted, because for the very same Reason, I might as well have omitted every Thing that *J. M.* said; which however would have been a Thing by no means justifiable. But then I think it must be said too on the other Hand, that were these Arguments a thousand times better than they really are, no Notice ought to have been taken of them at the Conference (and consequently that they ought not to have a Place in the Account of that Conference) provided they were urged at such Times, and upon such Occasions, as made them utterly impertinent, *i. e.* provided they had no manner of Connexion with, or relation to those Points which were debating, when these Arguments were propounded. For Instance, Suppose that when I was urging *Act. 1. 4, 5. Chap. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. and Ver. 32, 33.* suppose, I say, that whilst I was urging these Texts of Scripture to prove, that to be baptiz'd with the Holy Ghost, signifies to be endued with the Extraordinary or Miraculous Gift of the Holy Ghost, *J. M.* should have told me that the Church is a Spiritual House; that *John* baptized with Water, and Christ with the Holy Ghost; and the like; 'tis evident at the very first Sight, that these, and such like Assertions, with all the Consequences that can rationally be inferred from them, would have been no Answer to my Argument, nor have had any Relation to it. Now this which I have here supposed was really the Case, as I perfectly well remember. When my first Argument was drawing towards a Conclusion, and he found that it began to pinch, then it was that he first began his Discourse about the Spiritual House. This instead of removing, was endeavouring to avoid the Difficulty, by running off clearly to another Point: And therefore I immediately stopp'd him, telling him, that I would listen to no Arguments which should be so unfairly proposed. After the same Manner, though I cannot say certainly at the same Time, were the other two Arguments thrown in upon me; which the Reader will be the more ready to believe, if he observes one Thing which is very obvious, *viz.* That *J. M.* has not mentioned any Answers given by me to these Arguments, or to that other before-mentioned. How happen'd this? Why, because I never gave any. And why did I not answer those Arguments? Because they were alledged at such Times, and upon such Occasions, as made it improper and absurd for me to go about to answer them; *i. e.* when *J. M.* was to answer and not to object. I never refused a Reply to any of *J. M.*'s Arguments, which were seasonably and pertinently offer'd, as those have born, and will bear me Witness who were present at the Dispute, and were competent Judges of the Matter; but as to those which he was pleased to hale in, on purpose to perplex the Cause, and to avoid giving plain and direct Answers where he ought, I was so far from attempting to answer them, that I was resolved not so much as to give them the hearing. *J. M.* knew this well enough, because I told him so more than once; and therefore if he had thought these Arguments to be of any Importance, he should have mentioned them when it came to be his Turn to use Arguments, and then they would have been set down along with the rest. But this he never did, as the Reader may satisfy himself by turning to my Account, where he will find that when it was consented to, that *J. M.* should take upon him the Place of Opponent, he had recourse to two Arguments of another Sort; and I dare venture my own Credit, and the Credit of my Friends, who have subscribed to the Truth of this Account, against the Credit of *J. M.* and his Friends, if they should dispute, whether there were any more Arguments besides those Two made use of at that Time.

I HAVE now, as I hope, sufficiently clear'd my self from that Branch of *J. M.*'s Charge, which relates to my having omitted several of his Arguments against me: The other Part of the Accusation is, That I have also omitted, and not

only so, but misrepresented several of his Replies against him. For speaking of my Account he says, that (a) *the whole of it is so partial in giving his Replies, that some are totally omitted, others perverted; some curtail'd, others displaced;* (some Instances whereof he promises to detect as they come in Course,) insomuch that it seems (b) *he does not account himself answerable for what I and my Amanuensis have so unfairly set down and called his.* This is a very heavy Charge, and it concerns me very highly to see it removed; in order whereto I must first of all take notice, that the Truth of all this stands entirely upon J. M.'s single Authority. For it is to be observed that those Five Quakers before-mentioned have not subscribed to the whole Book, but only to the Five Articles contained in the Schedule at the End of it; and by Consequence their Authority (if they had any) can extend no farther than to the Matters contained in these Articles. Well! what are these Articles? Why, the Title says, that they are *Some few of the Arguments and ANSWERS that are totally omitted, &c.* But do the Articles answer to this Title? Pray judge for your self. The First (which is very odd) is neither Argument nor Answer, but my own Assertion, before-mentioned. The other Four are likewise the very same which you have already heard; that is to say, only some Arguments of J. M.'s against me. In short, there is not so much as one Answer either good or bad mentioned throughout the whole Schedule. This latter Part of the Charge, then standing wholly upon J. M.'s Authority, I might for that Reason very justly pass it over, as not worthy any farther Notice: but I will not make use of this Advantage, seeing I can so easily prove it to be false from his own Book. In order whereto I shall lay down these Two Propositions, the Truth whereof I suppose no Body will dispute, *viz.* 1. That nothing ought to be look'd upon as a Misrepresentation or Perversion of any Man's Reply to an Argument, which doth not alter the Sense, or any way diminish the Force of that Reply. 2. That since one great Design of J. M.'s Book was to prove me guilty of Partiality; and accordingly he has in general Terms charged me, with omitting and perverting his Replies and withal promised to detect me herein; he was bound as well upon the Account of his own Credit, as in Point of Justice to me, to alledge some particular Instances, wherein I have either omitted his Replies, or misrepresented them; from whence it naturally follows, that if J. M. has not any where produced such Instances, his Charge ought to be adjudged false and scandalous. I think this is putting the Matter upon as fair an Issue as J. M. can desire: And as for my Part I need not desire any Thing more; for let him, or who else will, undertake the Trial, and see if he can find any one single Instance of a Reply, which I am charged with having either omitted, curtail'd, or displaced, throughout the whole Book. J. M. has indeed instanced in Three Replies, which he says I have perverted. But they are such as, if he says true, (which however I do by no means grant) a Man who is not set upon wrangling, would have been ashamed to have insisted upon. For the first is a Reply, not to any of my Arguments, but to some Discourse which I had with him in the Yard before the Conference began, and by Consequence is nothing to the Purpose. The second, is an Answer to an Argument of mine, occasionally proposed to him at one of the Conferences, and set down in my Account, *viz.* That if the being endued with the ordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost were being baptized with the Holy Ghost, it could not be true that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost did not commence till Pentecost; because those ordinary Gifts have been dispensed to good Men in all Ages. The Reply which I have set down as J. M.'s is this, *That good Men in all Ages were baptized with the Holy Ghost; but it was not called by that Name in those Days.* Now by this, says he, the Partiality of his Relation is detected: For my Answer he remembers no more exactly than the Occasion of the said

(a) Page 9.

(b) Page 21.

Objection, which was not in the Words recited by him. Well; what Words was it in then? Why, you may go look; for J. M. does not think fit to inform you, but instead hereof tells me that he *will now favour me with an Answer, that I may not depend upon my treacherous Memory for my next Publication.* This was kindly done, I must confess; and since he is so good-natur'd I will venture to ask one Favour more; which is, That in his next Publication he would be pleased to help my Understanding too, by shewing me how I am to make Sense of this Answer, for at present I am at a great Loss to know what he would have by it. Thus much I am certain of, that this Answer is nothing like that which he gave at the Conference, nor does J. M. pretend that it is the same; so that the Treachery which he has discovered, appears now very plainly not to have been in my Memory, but in his own Designs; it being natural to suppose that if he had known of any considerable Variation that I had made in his Answer, he would have told us particularly what it was. The third and last Instance is, That whereas in Answer to one of my Arguments I have made J. M. to say, That Water-Baptism was practised by the Apostles, in Compliance to the Weakness of those Times: The Word *Weakness* he says is my own. Now every one sees that whether the Word be put in or left out, the Reply of J. M. will be the very same. These are all the particular Instances wherein J. M. has so much as pretended that I have perverted his Replies; in every one of which you can't but observe that the Charge is most notoriously false; and as to the rest he has own'd them to be his Replies, by undertaking to defend them as such, without making the least Exception against so much as one of them. And indeed could J. M. have produced any Instance or Instances of Replies, either misrepresented or omitted by me, which would have born the Test, 'tis natural enough to think that he would have inserted them in his Schedule, as well as he did the Arguments. I am very sure that this is by far the most material Part of his Charge, and by Consequence what he should have been particularly careful to support by the joint Testimonies of himself and his Friends. But he knew very well that his Friends could not honestly attest to any such Articles; and therefore I suppose could not find in his Heart to put it upon them; I am willing, I say, to suppose that he was thus tender of the Honour and Consciences of his Friends; though to say the Truth it can hardly be supposed, considering how bold he has made with them upon other Occasions. For I will venture to say, he might have charged me with any one Falshood he had pleased, and they might have set their Hands to it, with as good a Grace as they have to some of those Articles to which they have now subscribed.

AND thus I have, I hope, sufficiently vindicated my self (or rather the Quakers have themselves vindicated me) from the Charge of Falshood and Partiality in representing the Conference. To come now to his Answers to my Arguments, the first whereof as you may remember turns upon this Question, *viz.* Whether the Baptism with the Holy Ghost is a perpetual Baptism or not. J. M. says it is; and that we may see whether he has proved it against me, it must be considered what I have supposed that to be which denominates a Person Baptized with the Holy Ghost. In the Minutes which were taken down at the Conference, and which stand at the end of my Account, I have defined the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, to be the Miraculous Power of speaking unlearned Languages; which Definition I must own is very imperfect. For hereby it seems as if I limited the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, wholly to the Gift of Tongues, and consequently supposed that none but those who had that particular Gift, could be in the Scripture Sense of that Phrase, stiled Baptized with the Holy Ghost. But this is what I never meant, as appears very evidently from what I said at the Conference, where, though when speaking of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, with respect to the Apostles, I mentioned only the Gift of Tongues, as

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being the most remarkable Instance of that Miraculous Power which was bestowed upon them at *Pentecost*, when the Promise of the Father was fulfilled upon them, and indeed the only Gift which is particularly taken Notice of in that Place; yet there are several Passages which shew that my Notion of Baptism with the Holy Ghost, extended to the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost in general; *i. e.* I supposed that all Persons who in consequence of that plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost were endued with the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, were upon that Account, and no other, said to be Baptized with the Holy Ghost. Accordingly, on Purpose to prevent any Mistakes upon this Matter, I did, in drawing up my Account, put an *& cetera* after *such Languages as they had never learned*; I did also vary the wording of that Proposition: instead of *the miraculous Power of speaking unlearned Languages*, making it run *the miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost, — enabling them to speak such Languages*; which makes the miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost in general, to be the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and the Gift of Tongues one particular Instance of that Power. This latter Alteration *J. M.* has taken Notice of Page 65. and hereupon charges me with *Sophistically turning the Force of my Syllogism another way*. If he will call this Sophistry I cannot help it, but I think 'tis a Liberty which all Men do and ought to take, when any Thing is incommodiously and obscurely expressed in one Place, to vary the Phrase in another, in order to make their Meaning understood. But he pretends that by this Variation I have made him to say that which he did not say. This indeed is something. But what is it? I dare say you will hardly guess; but you shall hear, (c) *What I denied*, says he, *was — That Baptism with the Holy Ghost was the miraculous Power of speaking unlearned Languages: But by his varying the Phrase, he makes me to affirm, That Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is not that miraculous Power of the HOLY GHOST; which Charge I utterly deny.* Do you so Sir? Why then it seems, though you will not grant that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was the miraculous Power of speaking unlearned Languages; yet you will grant that it is the miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost in general, which is the very Thing I would have. But I will be more civil to *J. M.* than he has been to me, and not take his Opinion from this single Passage, but from his whole Book, in which he has sufficiently declared that he does not mean to limit the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, to the miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost only. At Page 42. he says, *that none can partake of the Graces of the Holy Ghost, but must be Baptized with the Holy Ghost.* And at Page 46. he takes leave to tell me, *that no Sanctifying Grace is without the Spirit's Baptism.* Such a Liberty as this wanted some Apology, considering what he has elsewhere advanced. For he has granted, and does still maintain, that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, did not begin till *Pentecost*. Now whether his saying after this, that there is no Sanctifying Grace without the Spirit's Baptism, does not effectually exclude all the Prophets and Holy Men from the Beginning of the World till *Pentecost*, from Sanctifying Grace, I shall willingly leave to the Consideration of his Friends. But this is only by the Way: That which I produced these Passages for, was to give the Reader a true State of the Question between *J. M.* and me, which now appears plainly to be this, *viz.* That whereas he affirms, that whoever is endued with any Gifts of the Spirit at all, may in the Scripture Sense of that Phrase, be said to be Baptized with the Holy Ghost: On the contrary I have affirmed; and used Arguments to prove, that the Promise of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost related only to those Miraculous and Extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, which were to be poured out upon the Apostles, and some few others in the Primitive Times. How well *J. M.* has answered these Arguments in his Book, (which he scarce so much as attempted to do at the Conference) we are now to see.

(c) Page 66.

THE principal Argument I insisted upon for the Proof of my Assertion, is drawn from *Acts* 1. 4, 5. *Acts* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. and *Verses* 32, 33. of the same Chapter, compared together. Now upon these *J. M.* observes in the first Place, that (d) *We do not find that the Power of Speaking unlearned Languages, is called the Holy Ghost's Baptism*; which is to say just nothing at all. For I do not find that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost is either here or any where else defined expressly, and *in terminis*, what it is; and therefore this can be no Argument either for or against any Notion of that Baptism whatsoever. But he proceeds: *Neither can any Inference be from thence fairly deduced that it is so meant or intended*: Well; How does he prove this? Why thus; *For the first of them relates what our Lord commanded them (the Apostles) to wait for, viz. The Promise of the Father*; and this it seems I cannot prove to be the Power of speaking unlearned Languages——. The next gives a Relation of the Holy Ghost's coming upon the Disciples in that eminent manner, *wherewith being filled, they spake with Tongues as the Spirit gave them Utterance*: Now this, says he, rightly enough, was only an Effect of the Spirit at that Time for peculiar Ends; but then he denies the Consequence which he supposes I would draw from hence, *viz. that the speaking with Tongues was the Baptism with the Holy Ghost*; because he imagines that then I must make so many Baptisms as there are Effects of the Spirit.—— The last says he gives an Account, that Christ having received the Promise of the Holy Ghost, and then breaks of with an *& cetera*, which must be thus supplied, *had shed forth that which they then saw and heard*, for these are the very Words of the Text. Now this he thinks explains beyond all Contradiction, what the Promise of the Father was, which Christ commanded them to wait for, *viz. The Holy Ghost, — or Spirit of Truth IT SELF, whatever Effect it might have, or Qualification it might give.*

THIS is the Substance of *J. M.*'s Answer; by which I think any one may see with half an Eye, that he is all this while running away with a wrong Hypothesis, *viz.* That I have confined the Notion of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost to the Gift of Tongues only: Whereas taking the Notion of that Baptism in the Latitude explained above, wherein I always understood it, his Objections will then not only vanish, but my Assertion may be established by those very Arguments by which he has endeavour'd to overthrow it. For if in the first of the above-cited Places, we are taught that the Apostles were commanded not to depart from *Jerusalem* till they had received the Promise of the Father, which Promise was, that they should be Baptized with the Holy Ghost, then they were not as yet Baptized with it. If in the Second it is declared, that at the Day of *Pentecost*, *they were filled with the Holy Ghost, i. e.* as the * Phrase imports, and the Circumstances of the Place evidently shews, endued with some extraordinary or uncommon Power of the Holy Ghost, by which they spake with Tongues, and were enabled to do many other Miracles, we have then all the Reason to believe, that their being thus filled with the Holy Ghost, was that very Baptism, which our Saviour promised them; because (as I have observed in my Account,) this was the only remarkable Thing which happened to the Apostles between our Lord's Ascension, and the Time of their Departure from *Jerusalem*, which can with any manner of Colour be supposed to be that Baptism. But the Third and last Passage puts the Matter beyond Dispute; for there *St. Peter* positively declares that this, *i. e.* this pouring forth of the Spirit upon the Apostles in that extraordinary Manner, was the Accomplishment of our Saviour's Promise, that the Apostles should be Baptized

(d) Page 25, 26.

* That the Phrase *πληροῦν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἁγίῳ* to be filled with the Holy Ghost, does in the Scripture Language imply a partaking of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary Manner, the Reader may easily convince himself, by turning to these following Places, *viz. Acts* 4. 8.—6. 3.—7. 55.—9. 17.—11. 24.—13. 9. *Luke* 1. 15, 41, 67.—4. 1.

with the Holy Ghost; which it could not possibly be, unless it be supposed that this pouring forth of the Spirit was that very Baptism which was promised them. Besides those Texts, there is one more, which does very much confirm what I am now advancing, and that is *Luke. 24. 49. Tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem until ye be endued with Power from on High.* This was spoken by our Saviour to his Apostles; and the Power from on High, which they were here commanded to tarry for, is evidently the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, as appears by comparing this Verse with *Acts 1. 4.* Now that this Power from on High, was that extraordinary or miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost, by which they were qualified for the Apostolic Office, is so plain a Case, that it would be a Shame to go about to prove it.

AND now I will leave the Reader to judge, whether J. M. has answered this Argument. For it appears First, That it may be inferred from these Texts, by plain Consequence, that the *Promise of the Father* was, though not the miraculous Power of speaking unlearned Languages, exclusively of all other miraculous Gifts, yet, the extraordinary and miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost, by which the Apostles, and others, were enabled to speak with Tongues, and do many other wonderful Works. It appears also, Secondly, That I do not make so many distinct Baptisms, as there are Effects of the Spirit. For according to my Hypothesis, all Persons who were stiled Baptized with the Holy Ghost, were stiled so upon the same Account, viz. Because, in consequence of this Descent of the Holy Ghost, they were endued with the extraordinary Power of the Holy Ghost, though indeed this extraordinary Power was not manifested in all Persons the same way. As to what J. M. says in the Third Place, viz. That the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, was giving of the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of Truth IT SELF, it is absurd. For by the Spirit it self he means, or he means nothing, the Person of the Spirit. But how the Spirit can be received by mere Men, any otherwise than by his Gifts, J. M. is desir'd at his Leisure to explain. Besides, if it could, the bare receiving of the Spirit cannot be what the Scriptures mean by being Baptized with the Spirit; for certainly it may be affirmed that the Spirit it self was given to the Prophets of Old, as truly as it can be affirmed, that it is given to Christians now. And yet the Prophets could not be baptized with the Spirit, even according to J. M.'s Concession; for he grants, that the Spirit's Baptism did not begin till after our Lord's Ascension.

It may perhaps be objected, that though the Argument above set down does prove that the Apostles were baptized with the Holy Ghost, by their being endued with the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost; and consequently that the being endued with the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost was one Thing which did in those Days denominate any Person so baptized; yet it does not prove that this was the only Thing. To which I answer, that it does; unless some plain Instance can be produced from Scripture, where that Phrase is applied, or from whence it may be inferred by good Consequence, that it does belong to such as have been and are endued with the ordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost only. For the Scripture being our only Rule in this Case, 'tis evident that we can determine no farther than we have Warrant from thence so to do. But if the Scripture does constantly apply the Phrase *baptized with the Holy Ghost*, to such Persons as were endued with the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and to none else; then 'tis plain, that it must be without any Warrant from Scripture, if we say that those who are endued only with the ordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, are baptized with the Holy Ghost. Now I do challenge the Quakers to shew me so much as one Text, by which it can be proved that the Phrase *baptized with the Holy Ghost* was ever applied, or ought (according to the Scripture Sense of it) to be applied to any such Persons as had or have only the Sanctifying Gifts or Graces of God's Spirit; i. e. the ordinary

ordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost. *J. M.* has indeed produced Three Places to this Purpose. But Two of them (which are *Acts* 2. 16, 17, 18. and *Verse* 39 of the same Chapter) I have already shewn to be insufficient in my Reply to *G. G.* to which I refer my Reader. To the Third, I shall say a Word or two, because *J. M.* has made some Objections against the Exposition which I have given of it. The Place is *1 Cor.* 12. 13. *For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body, &c.* This Text was alledged against me at the Conference; and accordingly the Reader will find my Thoughts about it, in my *Account*, which are these; *viz.* That the Apostle in this Place was speaking only of Spiritual Persons, *i. e.* of Persons endued with the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost. That therefore when he says, *by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body*; he does not mean that he and all Christians in general were baptized with the Holy Ghost, but, that he and all those of whom he was then speaking, *i. e.* all those Spiritual Persons were so baptized. Now against this Interpretation *J. M.* has made several Exceptions. The First is, *That this Epistle was wrote to the whole Church at Corinth.* Most certainly! But what then? Does it follow that every Part of this Epistle related to the whole Church at *Corinth*? Might not the Apostle give some Directions in this Epistle, which belonged only to some particular Persons among them? Surely he might; and certainly he did (as will appear to any one who will but be at the pains to read over the whole Chapter) in this very Place; which being granted, there will, I think be Room enough not to extend the Signification of the Word *ALL* any farther than to all those particular Persons; since, as every one knows, that Word not only may, but in many Cases must, be thus limited. He objects farther, That whereas I expound the Word *πνευματικοί*, Persons endued with the miraculous and extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, the true and plain Signification is *Spiritual Persons* only; Now that the Word *πνευματικός* must, if it be interpreted in a Latitude proportionable to the Signification of its Original *πνεῦμα*, be rendred a Spiritual Person at large, *i. e.* a Person who is endued with the Spirit, whether in an ordinary or extraordinary Way, I grant. But this Rule of Interpretation will not hold in all Cases; and particularly it will not hold here, where the Apostle has evidently used the Word with a peculiar Energy to denote such Spiritual Persons only as were endued with the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit. This, I say, is evident from the whole of the Apostle's Discourse, where those Gifts, upon the Account whereof those Persons are stiled *πνευματικοί*, are all of them extraordinary. — But for the Signification of the Word *πνευματικός*, I must refer those, who desire farther Satisfaction, to the Learned Dr. *Hammond* in his Annotations upon the Place; and on *Luke* 9. 55. And for the Interpretation of the Text now in Dispute, to the Learned Dr. *Bennet's Confutation of Quakerism*, Chap. 5. from Page 56. to Page 60. and Chap. 19. and 20. throughout, where I doubt not but every impartial Judge will find it established entirely to his Satisfaction.

AND thus much for the First Argument. We will proceed now to the Second, drawn from *Mat.* 28. 19. *Go ye therefore, &c.* Now to prove, that this Text must be understood of Water-Baptism, I alledged, 1st, That the Word *βαπτίζω* does properly and literally signify to *Dip* or *Wash*. Which being granted me, I produced against him the Argument of *R. Barclay*, upon this very Place; That *there was no Necessity to go from the literal Sense of the Words, and that therefore we ought not to go from it.* To this Argument *J. M.* (a) answers, as before at the Conference. — *That Dipping does not always imply Water, but may be Blood, or any other Liquid.* That is to say; the Word *βαπτίζω* signifies only to *dip*; now because a Thing may be dipp'd in Blood or any Thing else, therefore Water is not always imply'd, when that is used. This I am told of

(a) Page 47. 48.

very gravely; and lest I should doubt it, he offers to prove it from *Rev.* 19. 13. where we have *ἵμῳ βαπτυσθέντι αἵματι*, which he translates *his Vesture was dipped in Blood*; and from *Isaac Causabon*, who, it seems, tells us, that *baptizare* is *mergere ad tingendum*, from the *Radix βαπτίζω tingo*. But what is all this to the Purpose? The Question is not what the Word *βαπτίζω* does sometimes signify, but what it must signify in this Place. This Text you say must be understood literally; you likewise grant that to baptize literally signifies to dip in some Liquid; consequently you must grant, that our Saviour commanded his Disciples to go and baptize all Nations in some Liquid. The Matter therefore only is what that Liquid is which our Saviour commanded his Disciples to baptize with. Now if thou wilt persist in it, that this Liquid could be Blood, or any Thing else besides Water, for ought I know a little Hellebore, and a Dark Room, will bring thee to a Sense of thy Extravagancy much sooner than disputing with thee. After all, it seems *J. M.* does not himself lay any Stress upon this Answer; for he says that *it was not intended as an Answer to the Argument, but only to my noisy Clamour*. Well; what then, does he give as an Answer? Why, you have it in these Words: *I do not find but the Text literally expresseth its own Meaning in such significant Words, as to the wary Reader is more intelligible, than any Thing that can be added or implied would render it*. Truly, nor I neither. The Text is so very clear, that were it not for such as *J. M.* it would be a Shame to go about to make it clearer. But what is this Meaning, which the Text literally understood doth so significantly express? Is it that the Apostles were commanded to baptize with Water? No, have a Care of that; for it seems there is still *no urgent Necessity of such an Addition or Implication of Water*. That is to say; notwithstanding *J. M.* has granted, that this Text must be understood literally; notwithstanding to baptize literally signifies to wash or dip in some Liquor, as he has also granted; notwithstanding therefore it must be supposed, that our Saviour did command his Apostles to make Disciples by Washing them in some Liquor; and notwithstanding it is impossible to suppose that he could command his Apostles to dip or wash Men in any other Liquor but Water; notwithstanding all these Things, which prove beyond Contradiction that Water must be understood; yet there is no Necessity that it should be understood! The plain *English* of which is, That notwithstanding *J. M.* is fairly confuted from his own Concessions, yet he is resolved to set a good Face upon the Matter, and say, that he is not confuted. After this he leads us a long Chase, about the Signification of the Phrase *εἰς τὸ ὄνομα*, *in the Name*; the Design of which is to prove, after his Way of proving, that the Apostles were here commanded to go and baptize all Nations with the Holy Ghost. But this is only unsaying all that he has said before about the literal Meaning of the Word *Baptize*. For if this Text is to be understood literally, as he says it is, then the Apostles could not be commanded to go and baptize all Nations with the Holy Ghost; because the Baptism with the Holy Ghost is not a literal but a figurative Baptism.

THE other Argument by which I endeavoured to prove that this Text must necessarily be understood of Water-Baptism, stands upon this Question; *viz.* Whether the Baptism *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, which the Apostles were here commanded to administer, was the same with the Baptism *in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, which is elsewhere spoken of in Scripture. *J. M.* granted that it was; and from that Concession I argued, that then the Baptism *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, must be Water-Baptism. Because Baptism *in the Name of the Lord Jesus* was Water-Baptism; as I proved plainly from *Acts* 10. 47, 48. To this Argument *J. M.* at the Conference would give no direct Answer. But to make amends for this Defect, he answers in his Book — What? Why truly I cannot very well tell: For he runs on for near a whole Page together in such a Strain, that I think I may challenge the most cunning Man upon Earth to find

out his Meaning. We may in part guess what 'tis he drives at by the following Syllogism, to which he has pretended to reduce his whole Reply, *viz.*

If the Form of Words, viz. In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with Water-Baptism, was only intended in the said Commission, Mat. 28. then the Apostles, without all doubt, would have used the same, being otherwise disobedient.

But the Apostles did not use the same Form of Words, but only the Name of the Lord Jesus, as appears Acts 10. 47, 48.

Therefore not meant nor intended in the said Commission.

Now by this any one may perceive that J. M. quite mistakes the Point. For the Difficulty which he had to remove is this; *viz.* How it can be denied that the Baptism which the Apostles were here commanded to administer, and which is signified by the Phrase of baptizing *in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, was Water-Baptism; when the Baptism which is expressed by the Phrase of *baptizing in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, which J. M. grants is the very same Baptism, is Water-Baptism? This I say is the Question; instead of answering which, J. M. falls upon another Matter, and tells us that our Saviour never intended in this Commission to oblige his Disciples in Baptizing to use that very Form of Words, *viz. I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. I will be bold to say that this is more than J. M. has proved or can prove; but suppose it were true, what is this to my Argument? I hope though our Saviour did not intend to oblige his Apostles to use that Form, yet he intended to oblige them to administer that Baptism, which was meant or signified by that Form. Which if it be allowed to be Water-Baptism, the Dispute is ended; if not, J. M. will still be as much at a loss as ever, how to reconcile his denying it to be Water-Baptism, with his asserting, that it is the same with that Baptism, which is signified by the Phrase of baptizing *in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, and which evidently is Water-Baptism. But since J. M. is so fully bent not to listen to any Reason, it was his wisest Course to endeavour to evade the Force of the Argument by this Stratagem; for the Difficulty in Truth is such, that it is not capable of being removed, it standing wholly upon this self-evident Principle, *viz.* That where two Things are the same, that which is proved of the one, is also proved of the other. I shall observe one Thing more *ex abundanti* upon this Argument, which is, that we may from hence, in a very few Words, overthrow all that J. M. has built upon that Conceit of his, *viz.* That to baptize *in the Name*, signifies to baptize *into the Power of Jesus*, or of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. For the Use that he would make of that Interpretation is this, that (f) *Water-Baptism doth not baptize its Subjects into the Name*, i. e. *Power of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; and by Consequence that to baptize *in the Name*, &c. is to baptize with the Holy Ghost. I shall not stay to enquire precisely what he means by baptizing *into the Power*, &c. for let him mean what he will, his Argument must come to nothing. For J. M. grants (and in truth it cannot be denied) that the Baptism wherewith St. Peter commanded *Cornelius* to be baptized, *Acts 10. 47, 48.* was Water-Baptism; and the administering this Baptism is expressly called baptizing *in the Name of the Lord*; as also it is called *Acts 8. 16.* and *Chap. 19. 5, 6.* Now if those who were baptized with Water, were thereby baptized *in the Name of the Lord*, then J. M.'s Assertion that *Water Baptism doth not Baptize its Subjects into the Name*, &c. must be false. This is so clear a Case, that I was perfectly astonished to hear J. M. after he had granted that the Baptism wherewith St. Peter Baptized *Cornelius in the Name of the Lord*, was Water Baptism, saying im-

mediately, and as it were in the same Breath, that (g) he had sufficiently proved before that Baptism in the Name, as it signifies the Power of the Lord Jesus, is the Holy Ghost's Baptism. What does he mean by putting in these Words, as it signifies the Power? He contends that to Baptize in the Name, signifies to Baptize into the Power, and nothing else; and 'tis upon this single Basis, that his whole Argument stands. Wherefore according to him, to Baptize in the Name, does always signify to Baptize with the Holy Ghost. But unless he were resolved to maintain his Principles at any Rate, surely so plain an Instance as this to the contrary, should have convinced him of his Mistake, and taught him, that all he had said before, though it were a Thousand times better than it is, was to stand for nothing.

AND thus I think I have shewn the Insufficiency of J. M.'s Answers to the main of those Arguments which were urged against him at the Conference. Were the exposing my Adversary the Thing I had in View, there would be Encouragement enough for me to canvass the remaining part of his Book as particularly as I have this, where I could shew almost in every Page, such Instances of Ignorance, Malice, and Impertinence, as would raise the Pity and Indignation of every Sober and Ingenuous Person. But since my Design is not against the Man, but against his Cause, which I hope I have sufficiently overthrown by what I have already done, I chose rather to let the rest of my Book shift for it self, than to put my self, and those who may think it worth their while to peruse these Papers, to any further Trouble. Besides, there is another Reason, which had I any Inclination to it, would mightily discourage me from prosecuting the Dispute any longer against J. M. and that is, That though I should be so lucky as to make even the Quakers sensible that he is confuted, I can't be satisfied that ever the more for that they would believe themselves to be so. For J. M. has given us no reason to believe, that his Performance has passed the Approbation of the Brethren, much less that they will put the Issue of their Cause upon his Defence of it. 'Tis true he has muster'd up Five at the End of his Book, who are, as I said before, all Quakers: But their Characters are such as—I forbear to mention, any farther than just to acquaint the Reader, that one of them had so little Sense of Shame in him, as to tell me with his own Mouth, That he set his hand to the Articles, in which I am charged with misrepresenting the Conference, without so much as once reading them over. The truth as I am informed is that the Quakers in general have no Opinion of J. M. They found themselves mistaken in their Man, and went away dissatisfied at his Proceedings. And I am the more forward to believe this, from their forestalling him in the Vindication which they have published in G. G.'s Name, a Thing which I conceive they would hardly have done, had they been so well satisfied of his Abilities, and Proficiency in their School, as to believe they might safely rely upon him. Some of them, it seems, were heard to say, that J. M. talk'd too much Reason, for which Offence I hope they will think he has now made them Amends. But that which gave the greatest Disgust, was his granting to me that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost did not begin till Pentecost. This was giving up the Cause all at once, which G. G. saw, complain'd of it as an Imposition which I did put upon J. M. and as he says, earnestly offer'd to confute it. And to speak freely, J. M. did in that Point very much betray his Ignorance of the Principles of his Sect; for though 'tis Truth that the Baptism with the Holy Ghost did not begin till Pentecost, 'tis not Quakerism. For the Quakers, so many of them as I have Read or Discours'd, except J. M. stand to it with G. G. that it ever was. Wherefore the Friends had reason enough to be ashamed of their far-fetched Champion; and if by this time he is not ashamed of him-

self, I do assure him I am weary of him. The manner wherein he has used me is such, as an honest Man would have scorn'd; and the poor Shifts he has made use of, to avoid the Force of the plainest Arguments, are beneath that Sense which I know him to be Master of, and do therefore evidently shew, that he is resolved not to be, or at least not own himself to be convinced, how strongly foever he is confuted. Now to such as these I neither am, nor shall hereafter be at Leisure: And therefore all that I have to say to him further is, That for the Injustice he has done me I forgive him; and hope that he may render himself worthy of Forgiveness at God's Hands for the Injury he has done to his Truth; and with this I bid J. M. and his Friends heartily to farewell.

And thus I think I have shewn the Insufficiency of J. M.'s Answers to the main of those Arguments which were urged against him at the Conference. Were the expelling my Adversary the Thing I had in View, there would be Encouragement enough for me to canvass the remaining part of his Book as particularly as I have this, where I could shew almost in every Page, such Instances of Ignorance, Malice, and Impertinence, as would raise the Pity and Indignation of every sober and ingenious Reader. But since my Design is not against the Man, but against his Cause, which I hope I have sufficiently overthrown by what I have already done, I chole rather to let the rest of my Book shift for itself, than to put my self, and those who may think it worth their while to peruse these Papers, to any further Trouble. Besides, there is another Reason, which had I any Inclination to it, would mightily discourage me from prosecuting the Dispute any longer against J. M. and that is, That though I should be so lucky as to make even the Quakers sensible that he is confuted, I can't be satisfied that ever the more for that they would believe themselves to be so. For J. M. has given us no Reason to believe that his Performance has passed the Approbation of the Brethren, much less that they will put the Issue of their Cause upon his Defence of it. 'Tis true he has muddled up five or six End of his Book, who are, as I said before, all Quakers: But their Characters are such as I forbear to mention, any farther than just to acquaint the Reader that one of them had so little Sense of Shame in him, as to tell me with his own Mouth, That he let his hand to the Articles in which I am charged with misrepresnting the Conference, without so much as once reading them over. 'Tis true, as I observed is that the Quakers in general have no Opinion that they themselves mistaken in their Plan and went away. And I am the more forward to believe this, they have published in G. that they have done, had they been in their School, as to believe that they rely upon him. Some of them, it seems, were hard to say, J. M. talked too much Reason, for which Quakers I hope they will think has now made them Amends. But that which gave the greatest Deal of his granting to me that the Baptists with the Holy Ghost did not begin till Pentecost. This was giving up the Cause all at once, which G. G. law, complain'd of it as an insupportable And to speak and say J. M. and as he says himself, it was to confute it. And to speak truly, J. M. did in that Point very much betray his Ignorance of the Principles of his Sect: for though 'tis Truth that the Baptists with the Holy Ghost did not begin till Pentecost, 'tis not Quakerism. For the Quakers, so many of them as I have Read or Discours'd, except J. M. stand to it with G. G. that it ever was. Wherefore the Friends had Reason enough to be ashamed of their late chosen Champion; and if by this time he is not ashamed of him-





A

SHORT PROOF

OF THE NECESSITY OF

WATER-BAPTISM,

Upon Supposition that the Phrase of being BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST, ought not to be limited to the partaking of the Extraordinary or Miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.

Never before Published.

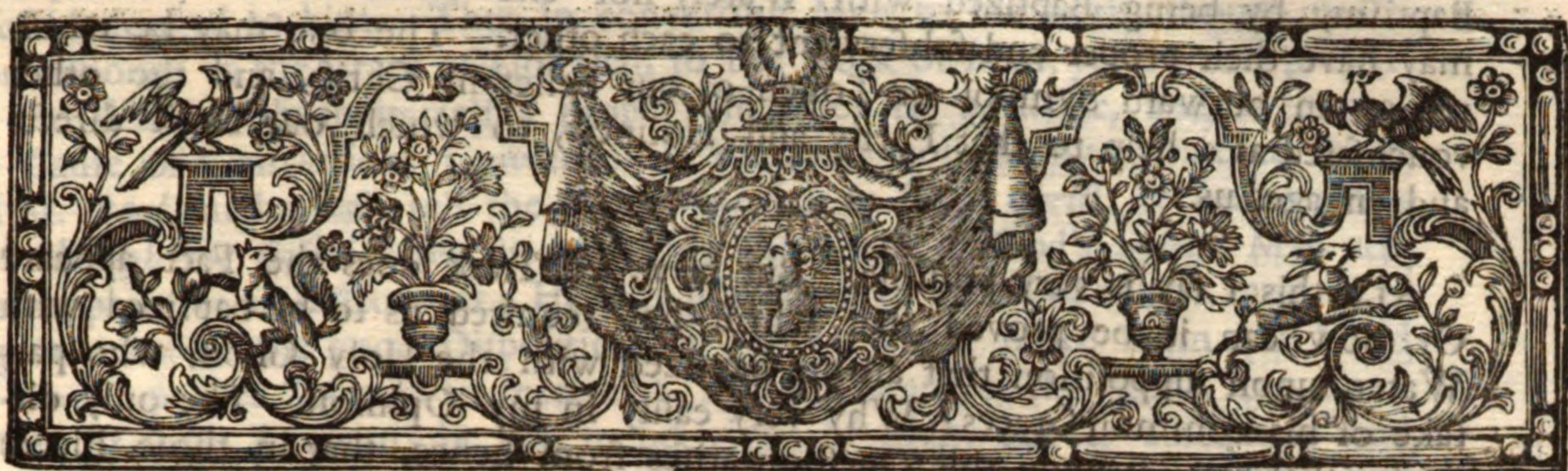


WATER-BAPTISM
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A

SHORT PROOF OF THE NECESSITY OF WATER-BAPTISM, &c.

IN the foregoing Dispute many Arguments have been used, to shew That what the Scripture speaks of under the Phrase of being *baptiz'd with the Holy Ghost*, is not that Common Grace of the Spirit, by which we are enabled to do the Will of God in the ordinary Course of our Lives, but those peculiar uncommon Gifts which were vouchsafed the Church for special Purposes in the first Ages of the Gospel. Now if this be admitted as true, the Conclusion from it That Water-Baptism is an Ordinance of Christ necessary to be observed by all Christians, will be so natural and obvious, that it cannot escape the most common understanding. This was the Reason why I chose to proceed upon this bottom, because I thought it the most plain; and as yet I see not reason sufficient to alter my Opinion. But if any be otherwise minded I am none of those, who think that the Consequence of it is so great as to be worth much Contention. For the Necessity of Water-Baptism as I apprehend, may be shewn by another way of arguing, which if it be not alike easy, will not to those who are disposed to judge impartially be less satisfactory.

THAT the Miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles and first Believers, was the Thing principally pointed at by our Saviour, when he spake of their being baptized with the Holy Ghost, all Divines have unanimously agreed, and the Circumstances of the Place where it is mentioned, shew beyond contradiction. But so far as I can recollect at present, none have pinned down the Phrase to that Sense exclusive of all others before Dr. *Bennet*, whose Reasoning upon this Head, I have endeavoured to illustrate and confirm. We will suppose (if you please) this to be a Mistake of the Doctor, and that according to the Scripture Sense of the Phrase, all are baptized with the Holy Ghost, who in vertue of that general Mission of the Holy Ghost, which was the effect of Christ's Ascension into Heaven, are Partakers of his Grace: The Consequence will then indeed be, that to be baptized with the Holy Ghost is still a Thing necessary. But what will the Quakers gain by this? will it follow that because Christians must be baptized with the Spirit, therefore they need not be baptized with Water? Surely not. For the necessity of one thing doth not disannul another, where both may well consist together. Now this

is here the Case. A Man does not become an improper Subject of the Spirit's Baptism, by being Baptized with Water, nor *vice versa*. Both Ordinances may have their proper end subservient to each other. The one may be required as an outward Symbol or Token of our belief in Christ, and the other vouchsafed as a help to that Purity and Holiness, to which our Faith directs and engages us.

ALL this I say is very possible. But how, you'll ask does the Fact appear? Or how can it be proved that Christ has required us to be baptized with Water, upon supposition that all are baptized with the Holy Ghost, who partake of his common Graces? Why very easily in my Opinion. The only difficulty that attends upon this Question arises from hence, that in those Places where Baptism is commanded, the Word *Baptize* is used indefinitely. Thus Matt. 28. 19. *Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, BAPTIZING them &c.* Again Mark 16. 16. *He that believeth, and is BAPTIZED, shall be saved; &c.* From these Passages both Parties rightly conclude that, to be baptized is a thing necessary to all Christians. But how? With Water or with the Spirit? With Water say we, and reason good if it be true, that to be baptized with the Spirit in the Scripture Language signifies something, which in the Nature of it could not be common to all Christians. But if it be admitted, that the partaking of the ordinary Graces of the Holy Ghost is the Spirit's Baptism, this Baptism will then be a thing common to all Christians, and consequently the Quakers for ought yet appears may be in the right, who say, that the Baptism required in these Places is not Baptism with Water, but Baptism with the Holy Ghost. Thus stands the Difficulty; for the clearing of which let it be consider'd,

1. THAT the Baptism here spoken of, is such a Baptism as the Apostles (*i. e.* Men) were commanded to administer. *Go YE and teach all Nations, baptizing them &c.* But the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is in Scripture emphatically ascribed to Christ as the sole Administrator. Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ βαπτίζων ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ. *This is he who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost*, Joh. 1. 33. not is it in the very nature of the thing capable of being administered by Men. By bringing Men to the Faith of the Gospel, we may prepare and qualify them for the reception of the Spirit. But actually to give the Spirit is not in our Power. This is the Work of God and of him alone. To evade this Mr. Barclay observes that, *though it be Christ by his Grace that gives Spiritual Gifts, yet the Apostle (Rom. 1. 11.) speaks of his imparting to them Spiritual Gifts, and he tells the Corinthians, that he had begotten them through the Gospel. 1 Cor. 4. 15. And yet to beget Men unto the Faith, is the Work of Christ and his Grace, not of Men.* Apol. Prop. 12. To which I answer, That as to what St. Paul says of his desire to see the Romans, that he might impart unto them some Spiritual Gift, it is of no weight, because it does not appear that by this, he meant imparting to them the Grace of God, whether ordinary or extraordinary. Dr. Bennet indeed has thought fit to allow this to be the *most natural Interpretation*. (Confut. Quak. p. 227.) But why, He hath not told us, nor can I see a sufficient Reason. For, as Grotius well notes, the Apostle might instead of *some Spiritual Gift*, as conveniently have said *some Doctrine, some Revelation, or some Prophecy*; for either of these had a tendency to that, which he declares to have been the end of his desiring it, to wit *the stablishing* them in the Faith of the Gospel. If so then what the Apostle was desirous to impart, was indeed a Spiritual Gift, *i. e.* a Gift to *him*, and (if you had rather) to *them* also; but in this latter Sense it could be no otherwise a Gift to them, than as it was a Declaration or Communication of what he had first of all received as a Gift from God. In truth to say of Men, that they *give the Spirit or the Gifts of the Spirit*, is a way of speaking which can in no sound Sense be admitted. In those things in which a Man concurs as an Instrument, though he be but a partial and less principal

principal Cause, 'tis not unusual to speak in such a manner as if the whole Effect belonged to him. Thus in converting Men to the Faith, though much more belongs to the Grace of God than to the work of Man, yet because preaching the Word hath in its self a proper efficiency to persuade, and is in part the Cause of Conversion, Conversion is therefore commonly attributed to it, and St. Paul might well tell the *Corinthians* that in *Jesus Christ*, he had begotten them through the Gospel. But in procuring the Grace of God's Spirit, Man acts not properly as an Instrument; He may pray for it in behalf of others, and may help to create those good Dispositions in them, which make them (as I said just now) proper Subjects to receive it. But the Grace of the Spirit, can upon neither of these Accounts be said to be given of Man, but is absolutely and solely the Gift of God. And thus if you will attend carefully, you will find it every where represented in Scripture. When St. Paul speaks of the Grace which *Timothy* had received by the Imposition of his hands, he calls it not his Gift, but τὸ Θεοῦ χάρισμα the Gift of God. 2 Tim. 1. 6. And when *Simon* the Sorcerer offer'd Money to St. Peter, to give him that Power that on whomsoever he should lay his Hands, he might receive the Holy Ghost, the Apostle in effect tells him, that the Power was not in him, but absolutely in God. Thy Money (says he) perish with thee, because thou hast thought (not that my Gift but) τὴν τῷ Θεῷ δωρεάν, that the Gift of God may be purchased with Money. St. Peter by laying on of his Hands, only did that in consequence of which, God was pleased to bestow the Holy Ghost; and in this Case there would have been just the same propriety in calling it HIS OWN Gift, as there would be if I should call a Hundred Pounds MY Gift, which was not given by me, but by my Friend at my intercession. In fine let the Quakers shew me one Instance from Scripture, where the Grace of the Spirit is ascribed to Man as the Giver of it. If they can, I will yield them back this Observation as of no worth. If they cannot, (and I am very sure they cannot) I shall look upon it as conclusive of what it is brought to prove, to wit, That the Baptism commanded in the Text above mentioned, cannot be the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, because the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, is a Baptism whereof Men cannot in any sound Sense, be said to be the Administrators. But

2. THE Baptism here commanded, is that Baptism by which Men were to be received as Profelytes to Christ. This is clear from the Words themselves, as has elsewhere been noted. Now it is well known, that it was at that time customary with the *Jews* to receive Profelytes by Water-Baptism. And not only so, but also that our Saviour himself did receive Profelytes the same way, as is incontestably clear from *Joh. 3. 26*. It is likewise undeniable from divers Instances in Scripture heretofore produced, that after our Lord's Ascension the Apostles administred Water-Baptism to those, whom they converted to the Faith of Christ, and this without any distinction of *Jew* or *Gentile*. These Circumstances being laid together, the Evidence for Water-Baptism will stand thus. Here is a general Law given by Christ, to make Profelytes or Disciples of all Nations by Baptism. The Words of this Law in a literal Sense, must necessarily be understood of Water-Baptism, and there is no sort of Intimation that any other meaning was intended, which yet it is reasonable to suppose there would have been, had it been his Design to have departed from the general Custom of making Profelytes then in use, or to have received Men into his Church by a different way, from that which was observed by the *Jews* in admitting Men into theirs. To support the literal Sense yet farther, here is also the Practice of Christ, or his Apostles at least, both before and after this Law was given, in such a sort, that it is utterly impossible to assign any probable Reason, why they administred Water-Baptism so generally as we find they did, but this, that they understood our Saviour to have commanded the use of Water-Baptism. Whether any one will think fit to call this Demonstration, I am not at all Sollicitous. 'Tis such Evidence as ought to satisfy any reasonable Man,

and in plain terms he that will not submit to it, is in no sort a fit Person to be disputed with.

AN Objection only remains to be answered, which is this. If the partaking of the Ordinary Graces of the Spirit, be admitted to be the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and Baptism with Water be still insisted upon as an Ordinance of Christ; it will follow that there are more Baptisms than one, proper to the Gospel Dispensation. For Baptism with Water is one Baptism, and Baptism with the Holy Ghost is another Baptism. The Consequence I allow to be just, and where the inconveniency of it lies I do not apprehend. St. Paul says 'tis true, that *there is one Baptism* Eph. 4. 5. But what then? Does he not say in the same place, that *there is one God and one Lord*? And yet he tells us elsewhere, that *there be that are called Gods many, and Lords many*. 1 Cor. 8. 5. The truth in this Case is plain and obvious, to wit, that strictly and properly there is but one God, the Creator and preserver of all things: But loosely and improperly there are many, as the Term God hath by use and Custom been applyed to other Persons besides the Supreme Being, *i. e.* to those who truly and properly are not Gods. In like manner we Christians do acknowledge but one Baptism, *i. e.* strictly and properly there is but one Baptism, to wit Water-Baptism; But figuratively and improperly there are many Baptisms, as the Term BAPTISM has been applyed to divers Things which really and truly are not such. To partake of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, is not strictly and properly to be baptized; And yet by a Figure our Saviour calls it being baptized with the Holy Ghost. So likewise to endure Afflictions for the Gospel sake, is not strictly and properly to be baptized; and yet our Saviour has called it by that Name, as you may find Mark 10. 38. where speaking to the Sons of Zebedee he saith, *Can ye be baptized with the Baptism that I am baptized with?* That is, can ye with me suffer Patiently? For that our Saviour calls his *Sufferings* his *Baptism*, is clear from Luke 12. 50. *I have a Baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitned till it be accomplished!*

I LEAVE it to any reasonable Person to consider whether this be not a very consistent Interpretation, and shall only add, that if it be supposed that the Apostle has affirmed in this Passage, that under the Christian Dispensation there is absolutely but one Baptism, *i. e.* one thing called or distinguished by the Name of Baptism, his Assertion will not be more true upon the Quakers Principles, than it is upon ours. For to endure Afflictions patiently for the Gospel sake, is a Duty incumbent upon all Christians whom God shall call to it. Now forasmuch as our Saviour has called this the being *baptized with his Baptism*, here is therefore plainly one Baptism, which is proper to the Gospel Dispensation. But besides this the Quakers do plead for another Baptism, to wit, the Baptism with the Holy Ghost; and consequently it is not true even in their own Account, that there is absolutely but one Baptism proper to the Gospel Dispensation.

A DE-

A
D E F E N C E
OF THE FIRST HEAD OF THE
R E P O R T
OF THE
C O M M I T T E E
OF THE

Lower House of CONVOCATION,

Appointed to draw up a Representation to be laid
before the ARCH-BISHOP and BISHOPS of the
Province of CANTERBURY, concerning
several dangerous Positions and Doctrines con-
tained in the Bishop of BANGOR's Sermon and
Preservative, and his Sermon preached *March 31.*
1717.

IN TWO PARTS.

W H E R E I N

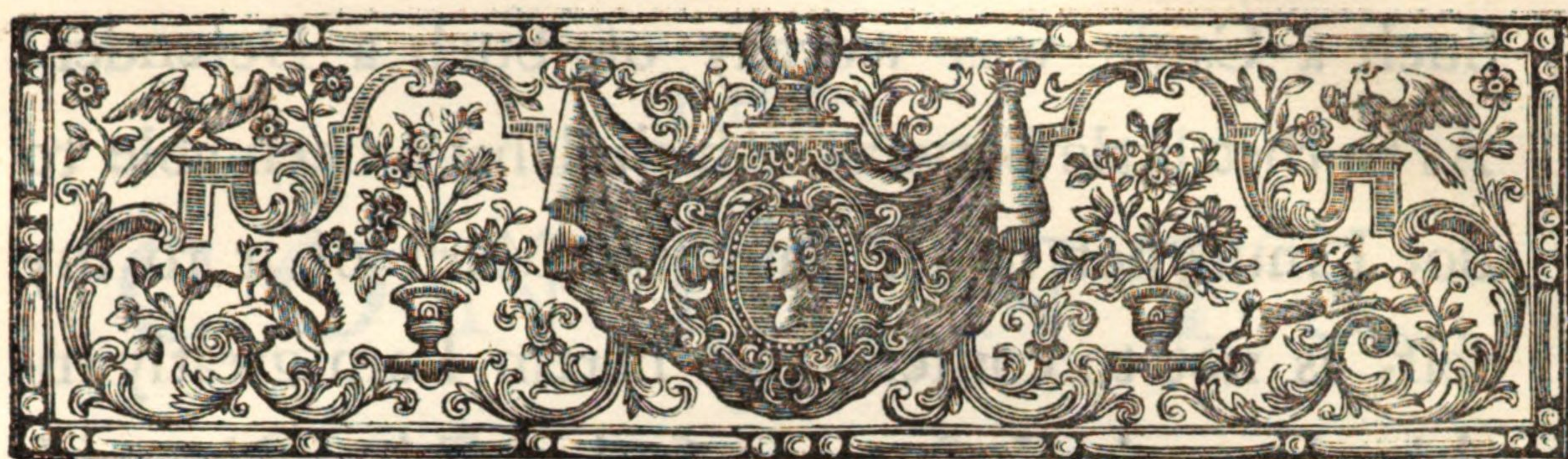
FIRST, The Truth of the Matters charged upon his Lordship by
the Committee, is vindicated against his Lordship's Exceptions.

SECONDLY, The Doctrines censured by the Committee in the
said Charge, are examined and refuted.

B E I N G

A Collection from several Tracts published by the Author on
that Occasion, corrected and improved.

By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.



TO THE REVEREND
THE
DEAN OF CHICHESTER.

SIR,

THE ensuing Sheets being the Substance of what I published in the late Controversies, I humbly offer them to the Favour of your Patronage. As the Part you bore in that Affair has merited you the general Thanks; so the Regard you have shewn to me calls for my particular Acknowledgments. Your Learning and good Sense have in many ways been very usefully employed, but in none more, than when you stood amongst the first of those, who made that seasonable Effort to secure the Rights and Powers of the Christian Church.

(a)

Such

DEDICATION.

Such a Cause was worthy of Such a Defender!
As to that little Service, which I have been able to do, I must not so far claim the Merit of it to myself, as not to confess, that herein I am greatly indebted to the Influence of that Friendship with which you honour me. Let this, Sir, serve as an Excuse for the Trouble I now give you, as the Honesty of my Intentions (which is all I can pretend to answer for) must be my Apology to the World. If in any Measure I have promoted the Interest of true Religion, the Satisfaction of having done it will be a Reward worth all my Labour. But next to this I know of nothing upon which I can reflect with greater Pleasure than that I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient and

most obliged humble Servant

(a) HENRY STEBBING.

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A
D E F E N C E

OF THE FIRST HEAD OF THE
R E P O R T

OF THE
C O M M I T T E E

OF THE
Lower House of CONVOCAATION, &c.

PART I.

Wherein the Truth of the Matters charged upon the Lord Bishop of Bangor by the Committee, is vindicated against his Lordship's Exceptions.

INTRODUCTION.

Wherein the Charge of the Committee is recited, and the general Questions arising from it are stated.

BEFORE we enter upon the Particulars of this Controversy, it will be proper to give the Reader a View of the Charge itself, and of the general Points which arise from it. The Charge then sets forth "That
" the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Bangor, hath given great and
" grievous Offence, by certain Doctrines and Positions by him lately publish-
" ed; partly in a Sermon, Intituled, *The Nature of the Kingdom or Church of*
" CHRIST: And partly in a Book, Intituled, *A Preservative against the Princi-*
" ples and Practices of the Nonjurors both in Church and State.

A

"THE

A Defence of the FIRST HEAD

“ THE Tendency of the Doctrines and Positions contain'd in the said Sermon and Book, is conceiv'd to be,

“ FIRST, To subvert all Government and Discipline in the Church of CHRIST, and to reduce His Kingdom to a State of *Anarchy* and *Confusion*.

“ SECONDLY, To impugn and impeach the regal Supremacy in Causes Ecclesiastical, and the Authority of the Legislature to enforce Obedience in Matters of Religion, by Civil Sanctions.” To support the first branch of this Charge (which is the Subject of the present Defence) the Committee produce the following Passages from his Lordship's *Sermon* p. 11. Octavo Edit.

“ As the Church of Christ is the Kingdom of Christ, He Himself is King: And in this it is implied, That He is Himself the sole Law-giver to His Subjects, and Himself the sole Judge of their Behaviour, in the Affairs of Conscience and eternal Salvation: And in this Sense therefore, His Kingdom is not of this World; That He hath, in those Points, left behind Him no visible humane Authority, no Vicegerents, who can be said, properly, to supply His Place; no Interpreters upon whom His Subjects are absolutely to depend; no Judges over the Consciences or Religion of His People. This Passage (say the Committee) seems to deny all Authority to the Church, and, under Pretence of exalting the Kingdom of Christ, to leave it without any visible humane Authority to judge, censure, or punish Offenders, in the Affairs of Conscience and eternal Salvation.” To confirm this they produce another Passage from the same *Sermon* p. 15. 16.

“ If therefore the Church of Christ be the Kingdom of Christ; it is essential to it, That Christ himself be the sole Law-giver, and sole Judge of His Subjects, in all Points relating to the Favour or Displeasure of Almighty GOD; and, That all His Subjects, in what Station soever they may be, are equally Subjects to Him; and that no One of them, any more than another, hath Authority either to make new Laws for Christ's Subjects, or to impose a Sense upon the old Ones, which is the same Thing; or to judge, censure, or punish the Servants of another Master, in Matters relating purely to Conscience, or Salvation. If any Person hath any other Notion, either through a long Use of Words with inconsistent Meanings, or through a Negligence of Thought; let him but ask himself, Whether the Church of Christ, be the Kingdom of Christ or not. And, if it be, Whether this Notion of it doth not absolutely exclude all other Legislators and Judges, in Matters relating to Conscience, or the Favour of GOD; Or, Whether it can be His Kingdom, if any mortal Men have such a Power of Legislation and Judgment in it. Again, p. 25.

“ No one of His Subjects is Law-giver and Judge over others of them, in Matters relating to Salvation, but He alone.

THE Observation which the Committee make upon these Passages is, “ That if the Doctrine contained in them be admitted, there neither is, nor hath been, since our Saviour's Time, any Authority in the Christian Church, in Matters relating to Conscience and Salvation; not even in the Apostles themselves: But all Acts of Government in such Cases, have been an Invasion of Christ's Authority, and an Usurpation upon His Kingdom.” To the same Purpose they cite another Passage from p. 14.

“ WHEN they (i. e. any Men on Earth) make any of their own Declarations or Decisions, to concern and affect the State of Christ's Subjects, with regard to the Favour of GOD: This is so far the taking Christ's Kingdom out of His Hands, and placing it in their own. Nor is this Matter at all made better, by their declaring themselves to be Vicegerents, or Law-makers, or Judges under Christ, in order to carry on the Ends of His Kingdom.

“ WHICH

Of the REPORT of the COMMITTEE.

3

“WHICH Words (*say they*) are not restrain’d to such Decisions, as are inconsistent with the Doctrines of the Gospel; as appears, not only from the general Manner in which he hath express’d himself, but from his direct Words, Page 15. *And whether they happen to agree with him, or to differ from him, as long as they are the Law-givers, and Judges without any interposition from Christ, either to guide or correct their Decisions, they are Kings of this Kingdom, and not Christ Jesus.*——

THE Committee understand these Passages as “excluding the Sacred Writers, as well as others, from making Decisions, and interpreting the Laws of Christ,” Which they support from another Passage, Page 12. —— *Nay, who ever hath an absolute Authority to interpret any writren, or spoken Laws, it is He who is truly the Law-giver, to all Intents and Purposes, and not the Person, who first wrote or spoke them.* Hereupon they observe, That “when a Distinction is made between the Interpreters of the written and spoken Law, the sacred Writers only can be meant by the Latter: Others (*say they*) have had the written Law; They only, of all Interpreters, heard it spoke by Christ. And his Lordship has left us only this Choice, either to deny their Authority to interpret the Laws of Christ, or to charge them with setting up for themselves, in opposition to their Master.

“THESE Doctrines (*proceed they*) naturally tend, to breed, in the Minds of the People, a Disregard to those who are appointed to rule over them.” And to shew that his Lordship had this in view; they produce another Passage from Page 25. *“The Church of Christ, is the Number of Persons, who are sincerely, and willingly, Subjects to Him, as Law-giver and Judge, in all Matters truly relating to Conscience, or eternal Salvation. And the more CLOSE AND IMMEDIATE this regard to him is, the more certainly, and the more evidently true it is, that they are of His Kingdom. —— And Page 31. If Christ be our King, let us shew ourselves Subjects to Him alone, in the great Affair of Conscience and eternal Salvation: And without FEAR OF MAN’S JUDGMENT, live and act, as becomes those, who wait for the Appearance of an all-knowing and impartial Judge; even that King, whose KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD.”*

THESE Passages being produced as a direct proof of the Charge; the Committee go on to argue the Point, from his Lordships Description of a Church; which, they observe, “well agrees with these Doctrines. He asserts, (*say they*) Page 17. —— *That it is the Number of Men, whether small or great, whether dispersed or united, who truly and sincerely are Subjects to Jesus Christ alone, as their Law-giver and Judge, in Matters relating to the Favour of GOD, and their eternal Salvation.* And Page 24. *The grossest Mistakes in Judgment, about the Nature of Christ’s Kingdom, or Church, have arisen from hence, that Men have argued from other visible Societies and other visible Kingdoms of this World, to what ought to be visible and sensible in His Kingdom.* And Page 25. *We must not frame our Ideas from the Kingdoms of this World, of what ought to be, in a visible and sensible Manner in His Kingdom.*”

THE Committee farther take Notice of it as an Observation of the Bishops, That “our Saviour hath POSITIVELY WARNED us against such arguing from visible Societies and earthly Kingdoms, p. 25. And yet (*say they*) the Scripture-Representations of the Church, do plainly express its resemblance to other Societies in many respects. And we presume, his Lordship could not be ignorant of the 19th Article of our Church Intituled, *Of the Church*, viz. THE VISIBLE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS A CONGREGATION OF FAITHFUL MEN, IN THE WHICH THE PURE WORD OF GOD IS PREACHED, AND THE SACRAMENTS BE DULY ADMINISRED, ACCORDING TO CHRIST’S ORDINANCE, IN ALL THINGS THAT OF NECESSITY ARE REQUISITE TO THE SAME. Though,

“ in disparagement of this Article, by himself solemnly and often acknow-
 “ ledged, he asserts Page 10. ——— *That the Notion of the CHURCH hath been*
 “ *so diversify'd by the various Alterations it hath undergone, that it is almost impossible,*
 “ *so much as to number up the many inconsistent Images, that have come, by daily Ad-*
 “ *ditions, to be united together in it.*”

THEY go on to observe that “ in his Lordship's Account, some Images, ne-
 “ cessary to form a just and true Notion of the Church, are left out; That
 “ He omits even to mention the Preaching the Word, or Administring the
 “ Sacraments; One of which, in the Words of the 27th Article of our Church,
 “ IS A SIGN OF REGENERATION, OR NEW BIRTH, WHEREBY, AS BY AN IN-
 “ STRUMENT, THEY THAT RECEIVE BAPTISM RIGHTLY, ARE GRAFTED INTO
 “ THE CHURCH.” And they “ wish that his Lordship, whilst he was writing on
 “ the Subject of the Power of the Church, had remembr'd his solemn Profes-
 “ sion, made at his Consecration, in which he promised BY THE HELP OF
 “ GOD, TO *correct and punish*, ACCORDING TO SUCH AUTHORITY AS HE HATH
 “ BY GOD'S WORD, AND AS SHOULD BE COMMITTED TO HIM BY THE ORDI-
 “ NANCE OF THIS REALM, SUCH AS BE UNQUIET, DISOBEDIENT AND CRI-
 “ MINOUS, IN HIS DIOCESS.”

FROM the Bishop's *Sermon* the Committee go on to his *Preservative*; And
 having just mentioned “ the Contempt thrown on a Regular Succession of the
 “ Ministry, and of the Episcopal Order in particular, for which his Lordship has
 “ found no better Words, than *Trifles, Niceties, Dreams, Inventions of Men, &c.*
 They observe, “ That as, in the *Sermon*, all Rulers and Judges in the visible
 “ Church are laid aside; so, in the Book, all Church-Communion is render'd
 “ unnecessary, in order to intitle Men to the Favour of God; and every Man
 “ is referr'd, in these Cases, to his private Judgment, as that which will justi-
 “ fy even the worst Choice he can make. This strange Opinion (*say they*) his
 “ Lordship grounds on what he calls a *Demonstration in the strictest Sense of the*
 “ *Word*, Page 89, 90. ——— Which is, indeed, nothing but the common
 “ and known Case of an erroneous Conscience, which was never, 'till now,
 “ allow'd wholly to *justify* Men in their Errors, or in throwing off all the Au-
 “ thority of lawful Governours; for this is putting all Communions on an e-
 “ qual Foot, without regard to any intrinsick Goodness, or whether they be
 “ Right or Wrong; and making every Man, how illiterate and ignorant so-
 “ ever, his own sole Judge and Director on Earth, in the Affair of Religion.”

To shew the use his Lordship intended from this Doctrine, they cite a Pas-
 sage in p. 90. where it is declared that “ *every One may find it in his own Conduct*
 “ *to be true, That his Title to GOD's Favour, cannot depend upon his actual being, or*
 “ *continuing in any particular Method, but upon his real Sincerity in the Conduct of*
 “ *his Conscience, and of his own Actions under it.* And another p. 91. where is laid
 “ down this general Proposition, *The Favour of GOD follows Sincerity, consider'd as*
 “ *such; and consequently, equally follows every equal Degree of Sincerity.*” Hereupon the
 Committee observe, That “ If Sincerity as such [*i. e.* meer Sincerity] exclusive
 “ of the Truth or Falshood of the Doctrine, or Opinion, be alone sufficient
 “ for Salvation, or to intitle a Man to the Favour of GOD; if no one Method
 “ of Religion be, in it self, preferable to another; the Conclusion must be,
 “ that all Methods are alike, in respect to Salvation, or the Favour of GOD.”
 They proceed farther to take notice that “ his Lordship himself has applied
 “ this Principle, in a Point of the tenderest Concern to the whole Reforma-
 “ tion; and in Virtue of it, has left no Difference between the *Popish* and our
 “ reformed Church, but what is founded in personal Persuasion only, and not
 “ in the Truth of the Doctrines, or in the Excellency of one Communion above
 “ the other. The Place they refer to, is at Page 85. *What is it that justify'd*
 “ *the Protestants — in setting up their own Bishops? Was it, That the Popish Do-*
 “ *ctrines*

Of the REPORT of the COMMITTEE:

“ *Doctrines and Worship were actually corrupt, or that the Protestants were persuaded in*
 “ *their own Consciences, that they were so? The Latter without doubt: As appears from*
 “ *this Demonstration; Take away from them this Persuasion, they are so far from be-*
 “ *ing justify’d, that they are condemn’d for their departure; give them this Persuasion*
 “ *again, they are condemn’d if they do not separate: or, in another Manner, suppose*
 “ *a Papist not persuaded of that Corruption to separate, he is, for the Want of that Per-*
 “ *suaſion alone, condemn’d: Suppose a Protestant, or one thoroughly persuaded of that*
 “ *Corruption, to separate, and he is condemn’d. From this pretended Demonstra-*
 “ *tion (say they) his Lordship infers, If this were duly and impartially consider’d,*
 “ *it would be impossible for Men, to unchristian, unchurch, or declare, out of God’s Fa-*
 “ *vour, any of their Fellow-Creatures, upon any lesser, or indeed any other Considera-*
 “ *tion, than that of a wicked Dishonesty and Insincerity; of which, in these Cases,*
 “ *GOD alone is Judge.” And hereupon they observe That “If it be true, that there*
 “ *is but one Consideration, viz. That of wicked Dishonesty and Insincerity,*
 “ *which will justify unchristianing, unchurching, or declaring out of God’s Fa-*
 “ *vour; and of that one Consideration, in these Cases, GOD alone is Judge,*
 “ *there is evidently an End of all Church-Authority, to oblige any to external*
 “ *Communion, and of all Power, that one Man, in what Station soever, can*
 “ *have over another, in Matters of Religion. Which (say they) will shew,*
 “ *what his Lordship’s true Meaning is, under the many Colours and Disguises*
 “ *he makes use of, when he speaks of Excommunication; and that he does*
 “ *not write more against the Abuse, than the Use of it. Your Lordships (say they)*
 “ *will likewise judge from hence, what View he has in pronouncing, at Page*
 “ *101. humane BENEDICTIONS, humane ABSOLUTIONS, humane DENUNCIATIONS,*
 “ *humane EXCOMMUNICATIONS, have nothing to do with the Favour or Anger of*
 “ *GOD: And in treating them as humane Engines, permitted to Work for a Time*
 “ *(like other Evils) by Providence, Page 101. as meer “Outcries of humane Terror,*
 “ *Page 99, as the Terrors of Men, and vain Words, Page 98.”*

THE Bishop’s Opinions being thus laid open the Committee conclude this Head
 with observing, that “they cannot understand, how his Lordship can consistently
 “ with them make good his solemn Promise, made at his Consecration, *To*
 “ *be ready with all faithful Diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange*
 “ *Doctrines, contrary to GOD’s Word, and both privately and openly, to call upon and*
 “ *encourage others to do the same.* Nor how he can exercise the high Office in-
 “ trusted to him in the Church: or convey holy Orders to others.”

THUS stands the Charge; the Particulars whereof may all be reduced under
 these two general Heads, viz. 1. That his Lordship hath denied all Authority
 to the Church. 2. That he hath made all Methods of Religion alike with re-
 spect to Salvation or the Favour of God, and hereby, not only made it (in
 this respect) an indifferent thing to what Sect or Communion among Christians
 a Man joins himself, but also, render’d all Church Communion unnecessary to
 entitle Men to God’s Favour. There are therefore two things in general ne-
 cessary to be inquired into, viz.

FIRST, Whether his Lordship hath taught these Doctrines or not; And,

SECONDLY, Whether, supposing that he hath taught them, they are worthy
 of Censure.

THE first of these Questions shall be the Subject of this, and the second shall
 be consider’d in the following part of my Defence. And if both of them
 can be determined in the affirmative, the Committee, I presume, will be fully
 justified.

SECTION I.

Of the AUTHORITY of the CHURCH.

CHAP. I.

Of the Authority of the Church in general.

THE first thing charged upon his Lordship by the *Committee* is, that he hath denied ALL Authority to the CHURCH. In answer to which his Lordship says, that he hath denied no Authority but Absolute Authority. This appears from his Answer to the *Representation* Chap. I. Sect. V. p. 24, 25. where are these Words; *I have denied NO AUTHORITY to the Church but ABSOLUTE Authority, i. e. an Authority to the Sentence of which INFERIORS are INDISPENSABLY obliged to submit, and therefore if there be in the Christian Church, an Authority in SUPERIORS properly so called which is not absolute, and an Obligation in INFERIORS to submit to meer human Authority which is not indispensable; I am, notwithstanding any thing I have said, as much at Liberty to declare for it as themselves.* Again—CHRIST hath delegated no Authority to Men to which Christians are ABSOLUTELY, i. e. —unlimitedly, unconditionally, without examination obliged to submit, or—to which they are obliged to submit, in any thing contrary to his Will. This is ALL that I have taught. *Answ. to Dr. Snape. p. 35.*

THIS is his Lordship's Plea: In which if there were any truth, he would stand clear of having said any thing more than what ought to be said; It being certain that there neither is nor can be in Men, and therefore not in the Church, any absolute, unlimited, or unconditional Authority. For all Authority which either is or can be exercised by Men, is and must be limited by this Condition, *viz.* That nothing be enjoined or commanded by them, which to comply with, is contrary to the Will of God. And upon this Account no Human Authority, *i. e.* no Authority exercised by Men, can oblige indispensably: For seeing no Man has Authority to oblige another to do any thing contrary to God's Will, it is manifest that every one has a Right to examine into all Human Injunctions, and be determined by his own Judgment, whether they be agreeable to God's Will or not; because if I am to be determined not by my own Judgment, but by the Judgment of Others, whether what they enjoin be agreeable to God's Will or not, I must then obey those Persons in whatever they command, *i. e.* the Authority of such Persons will be absolute. Admitting therefore that what is commanded me by Men, be in it self agreeable to God's Will, yet seeing I am to be determined herein by my own Judgment, and not by the Judgment of Others; if upon the strictest Examination it appears to me to be contrary to God's Will, my Obedience shall be dispensed with, *i. e.* I am not to obey; which seeing it is equally true of all Human Injunctions whatsoever; it follows therefore that no Human Authority obliges indispensably.

BUT this is evidently no part of the Dispute between his Lordship and the *Committee*; who have charged him with denying not ABSOLUTE Authority (which no Protestant ever claimed) but ALL Authority, as you have already seen. The single Point then is, whether his Lordship hath denied ALL Authority to the Church or not. If he hath, the Censure of the *Committee* is so far right; and if his Lordship should now say that he owns some Authority (which yet, as I shall shew hereafter, he doth not say) even this would not help him. For the Question before the *Committee*, when they drew up their *Representation*, was, I conceive,

conceive, not what Authority his Lordship would afterwards think fit to deny to the Church, but what he had then denied Her. They had *then* no other way to judge of his Opinions, but by his then present Writings; and of these Writings they were to judge, by the same Rule by which all other Writings are or ought to be judged of, *viz.* By interpreting the several Positions contained therein, according to the most plain, obvious, and natural Sense of the Words wherein they are expressed. The Question therefore is, whether in those Writings, there are not several Passages in which, according to this Rule of Interpretation, his Lordship has denied ALL Authority to the Church; and this I shall now endeavour to determine, confining my self wholly to such as are to be met with in his Lordship's Sermon.

THE only Passage that is there to be found in relation to Church Authority in general, is at p. 11. *Christ has in these Points (i. e. in the Affairs of Conscience and eternal Salvation) left behind him no visible Human Authority, i. e. (for so his Lordship must be understood) no Authority to be visibly exercised by Men.* Now 'tis certain that if the Church has any Authority at all, it must be a visible Human Authority; and consequently his Lordship hath here denied to the Church all Authority in the Affairs of Conscience and Salvation.

THIS his Lordship (as indeed it was necessary he should) has expressly (a) owned, and yet declares with respect to this very Passage, that he has denied no Authority to the Church but absolute Authority, or an Authority to the Sentence of which Inferiors are indispensably obliged to submit. But is saying that the Church hath no Authority in the Affairs of Conscience and Salvation, no more than saying that the Church hath no absolute Authority? Cannot the Church have Authority in the Affairs of Conscience, unless Inferiors be indispensably obliged to submit to her Sentence? Why, so it seems to his Lordship; for he tells us that *an Authority in those Points CAN be no less than an Authority to determine other Men's Consciences, and to determine either the Terms or the Certainty of their Salvation.* By an Authority to determine the Conscience I presume his Lordship means an Authority to bind the Conscience: But how? Universally, unlimitedly, indispensably, in every thing which is enjoin'd? Why this must be said to make the Assertion at all pertinent. But that an Authority in the Affairs of Conscience does, in common speech, signify such an Authority as this, his Lordship has only given us his Word, which will not I suppose be allowed to pass for an Argument.

BUT whatever be the Meaning of these Words, those which follow are exceedingly plain. Every one understands what it is to determine the Terms and Certainty of Men's Salvation, and will as readily apprehend that whatever Authority can do either, must indeed be absolute: But I must intreat his Lordship's Pardon, if I cannot agree with him, that such a Power is necessarily implied under the Notion of having Authority in Affairs of Conscience. He may interpret those Words after this manner, or after any other he thinks fit; but the thing to be considered here, is, not what his Lordship's Notions of Authority in these Cases are (of which Notions we know nothing from any Passage in his Sermon) but what the Generality of Men will most readily understand when they hear it affirmed, that the Church hath no Authority in the Affairs of Conscience? Affairs of Conscience, Affairs of Salvation, Affairs of Religion, I take to be Phrases of the same Signification, and every one knows that his Lordship uses them as such. Now by such Affairs as these I must confess I always understood, and I believe most Men do understand, all Affairs wherein their Consciences, their Religion, and consequently their Salvation,

(a) Answ. to the Represent. Chap. 1. Sect. 5.

are or may be any way concerned. In this Sense almost every thing about which the Actions of Men are conversant is an Affair of Conscience, because, as these Actions are either well or ill applyed, so the State of their Consciences and their Religion will be either better or worse, and their Salvation which depends thereupon either more or less secure. To deny therefore in this Sense that the Church hath any Authority in the Affairs of Conscience, is to deny that the Church has Authority to do any Act which shall at all concern or affect Men's Consciences, so as at all to alter the Rule of their Consciences, which in plain Terms is to deny that she hath any Authority.

I KNOW his Lordship sometimes speaks of Affairs relating *purely* to Conscience, and perhaps it may be thought but just to understand Affairs of Conscience, wherever they are mentioned, under this Limitation. For my part I am very willing to do his Lordship this Justice; but how it will help him I cannot perceive. This is indeed limiting the Authority denied to certain Points, but then it is limiting it to those Points with respect to which either the Church must have Authority, or she must be wholly without Authority: For what are Affairs relating *purely* to Conscience? Why, in common Speech they are such Affairs as no way concern a Man consider'd in his Political or Civil Capacity. Now 'tis manifest I think, that if the Church has no Authority with respect to such Affairs as these, she is absolutely without any Authority: For an Authority with respect to Political or Civil Affairs, his Lordship denies her, and very justly, because 'tis an Authority she cannot pretend to.

To shew you that the natural and proper Notion of Affairs of Conscience, or of Affairs relating *purely* to Conscience, is as I have now explained it; I must observe that his Lordship with all his Skill has not been able to bring that Phrase to any other Sense, without exposing his own Conduct in such a Manner, as I am perswaded those who have the meanest Opinion of his Abilities, could never have thought of. My Meaning will quickly be understood, when once you come to have learned what his Lordship's Definition of Affairs relating *purely* to Conscience is, which he has given us in these Words: *(b) Affairs relating purely to Conscience, as I conceived them, and do still conceive, are properly speaking (not open Acts against Men's own Consciences, which were never so called by any Writer in the World, but) Affairs transacted between them and their own Consciences, by the Direction of their own Consciences, and of which no Man CAN judge without knowing their Consciences.* Whether any Writer in the World ever called those Acts, Affairs relating *purely* to Conscience, which his Lordship says ought not so to be called, I shall not stay to inquire: But it may, I think, very reasonably be demanded of his Lordship, what Writer in the World ever defined Affairs relating *purely* to Conscience in the Manner wherein he has defined them, especially when those Affairs are spoken of as the Subject Matter of Human Authority? As I take it, the Dispute is wholly about the Signification of a Phrase, which seeing it must be determined by common Use, it had here been very proper for his Lordship to have produced his Vouchers. But this was impossible; and therefore his Lordship *again* gives us his *Word*, and only *tells* us, what HE supposes these Words to mean. Let the Reader then consider, whether according to the account his Lordship himself is pleased to give, he has not had a most weighty Work upon his Hands. He has with much Pains and great Subtilty been arguing from the Prerogative of Christ, and the Spiritual Nature of his Kingdom ——— What? Why, that the Church hath no Authority in those Affairs wherein it is in the very Nature of the thing impossible that she should have any Authority! I say impossible; for 'tis notorious that Affairs transacted between Men and their own Consciences, nei-

(b) Ibid. Chap. I. Sect. 9. p. 50.

ther are or can be the subject Matter of Human Authority, either in the Church or any where else. Take any particular Instance of Authority, and the Case will be clear: For do you mean by Authority a Power of making Laws? It is manifest that the subject Matter of these Laws must be something relating to the External Actions of Men, and not any thing which passes in the Heart, which no Body understands but themselves. Or do you mean by Authority a Power of judging, and punishing others? Here again the subject Matter of Authority must be Men's outward Conduct, and not their inward, which no Man can judge of besides themselves. This then must be the Substance of his Lordship's Reasoning, *viz.* That because Christ is King in his own Kingdom, therefore no Man has Authority in those Affairs in which no Man can have Authority; and particularly, no Man has Authority to make Laws in those Affairs about which no Man can make Laws; or to judge in those Affairs about which no Man can judge! His Lordship has owned this to be his Meaning with respect to the Case of *judging*, in express Terms. (*c*) *An Authority or Right to judge, censure, and punish in these Cases, (i. e. in the Affairs of Conscience) I reserve to Christ, and deny to all Christians of what Rank soever, because it is an Authority——which no Men CAN have; an Authority to judge in Points, in which no one CAN judge who does not know the Hearts of Men.* A very Substantial Reason without Doubt! But was this the Reason assigned by his Lordship in his Sermon? No, he tells us himself, and every one knows it to be true, that this was there argued (*d*) *by way of Inference from the Prerogative of Christ.* And who then would not have thought that this Authority was something which Men might indeed possibly take upon them to exercise, but could not lawfully exercise, because it would be an Usurpation of Christ's Prerogative?

BUT that you may have a clear and thorough View of his Lordship's Reasoning, according to this Notion of Affairs of Conscience, I shall give it you drawn forth in its full length. Thus then his Lordship begins, *Serm. p. 11.* "As the Church of Christ is the Kingdom of Christ, he himself is King; and in this it is implied that he is himself the Sole Lawgiver to his Subjects, and himself the Sole Judge of their Behaviour in the Affairs of Conscience and eternal Salvation" (*i. e. in those Affairs in which it is in the very Nature of the thing impossible that any one besides himself should be either Lawgiver or Judge*) "And in this Sense therefore his Kingdom is not of this World, that he hath in those Points" (*i. e. in those Points wherein it is impossible he should have left any visible Human Authority, &c.*) "left behind him no visible Human Authority, no Vicegerents who can be said properly to supply his Place, — No Judges over the Consciences, or Religion of his People. For if this were so", (*which in the nature of the thing is impossible to be supposed*) "that any such Absolute Vicegerent Authority——were lodged in any Men upon Earth; the Consequence would be, that what still retains the Name of the Church of Christ, would not be the Kingdom of Christ, but the Kingdom of those Men vested with such Authority." Again *p. 15.* "If therefore the Church of Christ be the Kingdom of Christ, it is essential to it that Christ himself be the Sole Lawgiver, and Sole Judge of his Subjects in all Points relating to the Favor or Displeasure of Almighty God" (*i. e. in all Points wherein he alone can possibly be Lawgiver or Judge*) "And that —— no one of his Subjects any more than another, hath Authority to make new Laws——or to judge, censure, or punish the Servants of another Master in Matters relating purely to Conscience or Salvation" (*i. e. in Matters wherein it is impossible that they should have any Authority either to make new Laws, or to judge, censure, or punish others*) "If any Person hath any other Notion —— let him but ask himself, whether the Church of Christ be the Kingdom of Christ or not? And if it

(c) Ibid.

(d) Ibid. p. 46.

“ be, whether this Notion of it doth not absolutely exclude all other Legislators “ and Judges in Matters relating to Conscience or the Favour of God?” (*i. e. in Matters wherein it is absolutely necessary that all other Persons should be excluded from being Legislators and Judges.*) “ or whether it can be his Kingdom, if (*which can never be supposed*) any mortal Men have such a Power of Legislation and Judgment in it?” Thus stands his Lordship’s Reasoning according to his own Explication of his Meaning! What some of his Friends may think of it, I cannot tell. But for my part had any one before hand offered me such a Comment upon his Lordship’s Words, I have such a Regard to his good Sense, that I should have wished him, either a more judicious, or a more sincere Advocate.

His Lordship will tell me perhaps, as he has told Dr. Sherlock in a like Case; that it is not (*e*) *so exceedingly absurd* to argue against Impossibilities, *because there are many things which Men do not see or know to be impossible, which yet are really so*: But I must beg of his Lordship to name that single Man, Protestant or Papist, High-Church or Low-Church, Juror or Nonjuror, who has ever believed that it was possible for one Man to judge of what passes in the Heart of another, or that Affairs of Conscience, (as he has been pleased to explain them) can be the subject Matter of Human Authority. If there be any such senseless Creatures upon Earth, his Lordship shall be allowed to confute them; if he can think it worth his while. But then I can never allow that it is any thing else but an Absurdity to go about to do it in the manner wherein his Lordship has chosen to do it. Suppose that some Body or other should have a Fancy to maintain that Brutes have Authority in Affairs of State; would his Lordship think it a proper way of answering such a Person, instead of telling him plainly that the thing is impossible, to harangue him about the King’s Prerogative, and the Nature of Civil Government? If he could, he may also think it proper to argue in the other Case from the Prerogative of Christ, and the Nature of his Kingdom, and not else: For the one is certainly as reasonable a way of proceeding as the other.

You see by this time how hard his Lordship was put to it, so to fix his Notion of Affairs of Conscience, as to make it implied that whoever has Authority in those Affairs, must have an Authority to determine either the Terms or the certainty of Men’s Salvation. I proceed now to take notice of another Reason alledged by his Lordship, to shew that these Words, *Christ hath in those Points left behind him no visible Human Authority*, cannot be understood as denying all Authority to the Church, which is, that they are (*f*) *further explained without Stop or Delay by adding* “No Vicegerents who can be said properly to supply his Place.” That these Words do follow the other without Stop or Delay I grant. But that they are an Explication of them in his Lordship’s Sense, *i. e.* so as to make it evident that he did not thereby intend to deny all Authority to the Church, I do by no means perceive. For

1. According to all the common Rules of speaking, his Lordship has, even in this latter Sentence, denied all Authority to the Church. For a Vicegerent (as the very sound of the Word imports) is one who supplies the Place, or acts in the Stead of another. And he supplies anothers Place, who does in any Case supply anothers Place, *i. e.* who is in any Case empower’d by another to act for him. If therefore Christ has left behind him No Vicegerents to supply his Place, then he has left behind him none who are in any Case empowered to act for him, or in other Words, the Church is without any Authority. Otherwise thus: So far as any one acts by an Authority delegated

(e) Ibid. Chap. 2. Sect. 7. p. 150.

(f) Ibid. Chap. 1. Sect. 5. p. 23, 24.

to him from Christ, so far he acts in Christ's Stead, or so far he is Christ's Vicegerent. Therefore to say that Christ has no Vicegerents, is to say that there are none to whom Christ has in any Case delegated an Authority to act for him, which again is to say, that the Church has no Authority. To what purpose his Lordship should insert the Word *properly* in this Sentence, I was not able to perceive, by any thing that I could find in his Sermon. That it makes no Alteration whether it be put in or left out, is manifest, because every thing which is, must be properly what it is; and therefore if Christ hath properly no Vicegerents, he hath no Vicegerents. But by his Lordship's insinuating now in his Answer, that to say that Christ hath properly any Vicegerents on Earth, is a Popish Doctrine, I judge, that by a proper Vicegerent, he means an absolute Vicegerent; so that in his Lordship's Opinion, it seems that no Man is or can be at all the Vicegerent of another, who is not absolutely so, *i. e.* who is not vested with that full Power, which is lodged in that other whose Vicegerent he is, and in this Sense it is true, that Christ has no Vicegerent. But that his Lordship speaks here in a manner peculiar to himself, is plain, because this Plenitude of Power is never supposed in any of those Instances wherein this Word is commonly used. Thus Kings are said to be God's Vicegerents, and yet no one supposes that Kings are vested with that full Power which is in God. Again, Ambassadors are said to be Kings Vicegerents, but their Power is also limited to particular Cases. If his Lordship will still say that neither Kings nor Ambassadors are Vicegerents, though they be so called; I answer, that I must be contented to take my Mother Tongue as I find it, and so I think should his Lordship as well as I. But

2. SUPPOSE that these last Words were capable of no other Sense, than that which his Lordship would now put upon them, how does it appear that the former are explained by them? *Christ* (says his Lordship) *hath left behind him no visible Human Authority, no Vicegerents who can be said properly to supply his Place, no Interpreters upon whom his Subjects are absolutely to depend, no Judges over the Consciences or Religion of his People.* These are all of them independent Sentences; nor has his Lordship by his manner of expressing himself, given us the least intimation, that he intended any of them as an Explanation of what went before. Admitting therefore that by proper Vicegerents nothing else could be meant but absolute Vicegerents, it will then be true indeed that his Lordship hath in this Sentence denied no Authority but absolute Authority. But what then? will it follow from hence, that he hath not denied all Authority in another? I think not; for it may be very consistently affirm'd of the Church, if she has no Authority, that she has not an absolute Authority. The like may be said of all those Passages in his Lordship's Sermon where he has declared only against absolute Authority: They will prove sufficiently that he denies so much; but they will never prove (against so many other Passages, where he has in as plain Terms as can be thought of, declared against all Authority) that he has denied no more. Upon what account indeed a Man who owns no Authority at all, should ever declare against Authority with any Reserve or Limitation, is a Question I cannot resolve, without supposing a sort of Policy, and cautious Dealing, which I am very loath to suspect in a Christian, much less in a Bishop of the Church. Whether his Lordship has not given the World too much Reason to suspect him as guilty of it, will be seen more plainly in another Place. In the meantime, I conclude from what has been said that his Lordship has in general Terms denied all Authority to the Church.

C H A P. II.

Of the Authority of the Church in particular; And, first, of Legislative Authority.

THE *Committee* not content to charge his Lordship with denying all Authority to the Church in general Terms, have specified some particular acts of Authority which they say he hath denied, to wit, the Acts of *Legislation* and *Judgment*. There is scarce any Instance of Authority which doth not fall under one of these; and therefore it will be very material to observe how the Case stands in reference to both.

To begin with the Authority of *Legislation*. The *Committee* say his Lordship hath left no such Power in the Church; And his Lordship answers as before that he hath denied no Authority of this kind, but *absolute* Authority. His Words are these, *If by an Authority to act for him (Christ) you mean an absolute Authority to make new Laws—relating to the Eternal Salvation of Christians, and binding their Consciences absolutely, I do indeed maintain that he hath left no such absolute Authority in any Man or Men—But if you mean any thing else by an Authority to act for him, you know I have expressed no more against it than you.* Answer to Dr. *Snape*, p. 20, 21. *In the Case of imposed Terms of Communion, I have declared against nothing but the absolute indispensable Obligation of Christians to submit to them, right or wrong, without examining whether they be agreeable to Christ's Will or not.* Ibid. p. 37. *If any one will infer—that I argue against all Right of appointing Time, Place, or Ceremonies, relating to religious Worship,—I answer, that I not only do not own such Consequences, but I really do not see them.* Ibid. p. 44.

THAT Authority of Legislation, and that only, which his Lordship affirms in these Passages, that Christ hath not left with any Man or Men, you see is such an Authority of imposing Laws, as obliges Christians to submit to those Laws absolutely, or without examining, first of all, whether what is commanded thereby be agreeable, or not agreeable, to the Will of Christ, *i. e.* whether they contradict or do not contradict any Law or Precept contained in the Gospel. I have already observed under the first Head, that as to this sort of Authority the *Committee* have no difference with him. What I have now to add is this: That the Legislative Authority claimed by the Church of England, is a Right or Power of making Laws in indifferent Matters only, *i. e.* in Matters left undetermined by Christ, or in Matters concerning which nothing is by him either commanded or forbidden. Of this sort is the Time when, the Place where, the Manner how, the publick Worship of God is to be performed, and some other Matters of the like nature. Concerning these things the Gospel, I say, has determined nothing particularly, and yet it is very expedient, and even necessary, that something should be determined for the Sake of that Order and Decency, which the Scripture recommends, and which Reason tells us ought to be preserved in every Christian Society.

Now this Right of appointing Time, Place, and Ceremonies, relating to religious Worship, his Lordship declares in the last of the above cited Passages, that he does not argue against, *i. e.* I suppose that he does not deny. But to whom is it that he does not deny this Right? To the Church? To make the Observation pertinent, it must be said, *Yes*. But by the Manner of his Lordship's expressing himself, there seems to be more reason to conclude his Meaning to be, that he denies it not to the Civil Magistrate. If, says he, any one

WILL

WILL INFER FROM HENCE *that I argue against all Right of appointing.* This Passage you see was added as a Caution, to prevent his Reader from drawing a wrong Inference from what he had been speaking of. And what was it that his Lordship had been speaking of? Why, he had for about four Pages before successively to this very place been arguing, that the Civil Magistrate has no Right to add Temporal Sanctions to the Laws of Christ. It must therefore be with respect to the Civil Magistrate that his Lordship affirms, that he does not argue against a Right of appointing Time, Place, and Ceremonies, relating to religious Worship, because else his Caution will be impertinent; for his Lordship could not suppose that from his saying that the Civil Magistrate has no Right to add Temporal Sanctions to the Laws of Christ, any one should be in danger of concluding that he had argued against a Right in the Church to appoint Ceremonies. It will not signify to dispute this Point any farther. Let his Lordship be supposed to say, that he hath not denied *to the Church* Authority to appoint Ceremonies in Religion. The Question will then be, whether this be a true Answer; and let the Reader once more judge from his Sermon. There we are told that *Christ himself is the sole Lawgiver to his Subjects — in the Affairs of Conscience and Eternal Salvation, p. 11. That it is essential to it (the Church) that Christ himself be the sole Lawgiver — in all Points relating to the Favour or Displeasure of Almighty God. That all his Subjects — are equally Subjects to him, and that none of them any more than another hath Authority — to make new Laws — in Matters relating purely to Conscience or Salvation.* That the Notion of the Church's being the Kingdom of Christ, doth absolutely exclude all other Legislators — in Matters relating to Conscience or the Favour of God. And that the Church cannot be Christ's Kingdom, if any mortal Men have such a Power of Legislation, p. 16. These are his Lordship's Words, which I fancy sound very differently in the Ears of most Men, from these, *No Man has such an Authority of imposing Laws, as that Christians shall be obliged to submit to those Laws, right or wrong, without examining whether what is enjoined thereby be agreeable to the Will of Christ.* For in these Passages his Lordship has declared absolutely, that there are no other Lawgivers in the Affairs of Conscience or Salvation, *i. e.* in the Affairs of Religion, but Christ. Now if this be true, it seems plain that the Church hath not only no Authority to make new Laws absolutely, but no Authority to make any new Laws at all.

I CAN think of but two Ways by which his Lordship can possibly endeavour to get clear of this Charge, and these are, by saying either, 1. That making Laws about Matters indifferent (which are confessedly the only Matters about which the Church has Authority to make Laws) is not making Laws in Matters of Conscience, or Salvation: Or, 2dly, That Laws made by an Authority derived from Christ (as the Authority of the Church is acknowledged to be) are properly Christ's Laws, and that therefore whatever Authority of making Laws is exercised by the Church, Christ is still properly sole Legislator. The former of these two Methods his Lordship has already attempted; and with what success you have seen. The other is so pitiful a Pretence that I promise my self his Lordship will not make use of it. For,

1. THOUGH it be true that Laws made by an Authority derived from Christ, are properly Christ's Laws, yet they are not so properly Christ's Laws, but that they are also the Laws of those by whom they are immediately enacted; which is evident, because they become Christ's Laws no otherwise than by being first of all theirs. Whether his Lordship will agree to this Position, I cannot tell. There is a Passage in his Answer to Dr. Snape, which looks a little suspicious. (g) *If*, says his Lordship (speaking of Church Governours)

I find their Institutions agreeable to the Will of Christ; I obey them. Why? Not because of their Authority, but because of Christ's Authority. I obey him, not them. But let me ask his Lordship this one Question. Whom do I obey by Kneeling at the Sacrament, or by reading the Book of Common Prayer? Do I obey Christ? Yes without doubt I do. But then I say withal, that I obey the Church as well as Christ, or rather that I obey Christ by obeying the Church, and no otherwise; For the Gospel has left it indifferent, whether I eat the Lord's Supper standing or kneeling; whether I Pray by a Form or without a Form. I do this therefore, because of Christ's Authority, and because of the Church's Authority, *i. e.* I do it because of that Authority which Christ hath lodged in the Church, and which she exercises by Virtue of his Commission. Now if there be any in the Church, by whose Command others may be bound to do that which otherwise they would not be bound to do; there are then in the Church those who are proper Legislators or Lawgivers, because the proper Notion of Legislative Power, is, when there arises an Obligation to do any thing immediately from the Will of another. It matters not here to consider how it comes to pass, that those Persons have a Power of obliging others; for this is inquiring, not whether they be indeed Lawgivers, but by what means they are so, which let them be what they will, it alters not the case. If any one has this Power originally in himself, *i. e.* independently of another, he is then originally or independently a Lawgiver. If he has it not in himself, but from another, though he is not originally or independently; yet so long as he has this Power, he is properly a Lawgiver. Upon supposition therefore, that Christ has given to Men an Authority to make Laws in any Affairs, Christ will indeed be sole original or Independent Lawgiver in his Church. But he will not be absolutely sole Lawgiver, because he has appointed other Lawgivers under, or in subordination to him. But

2. SUPPOSE that it were consistent with Propriety of Speech to say, that Christ is the sole *Lawgiver* in his Church upon this account, *viz.* because All Authority which the Church has to make Laws, is derived from him, and that it is in this Sense only, that his Lordship hath affirmed, that no Man hath Authority to make Laws in the Affairs of Conscience, *viz.* That no Man hath this Authority in himself, or independently on Christ. Upon this Supposition, his Lordship will indeed be cleared from saying any thing but what ought to be said; but then he will be made to have taken a great deal of Pains to little Purpose: For who ever taught or imagined that the Church had any Authority in herself, or independently on Christ? Besides, this Plea is inconsistent with his Lordship's own Defence: he is charged with denying to the Church all Authority to make Laws. Hereupon he declares that he hath opposed no Authority, but an absolute Authority. But could he have pleaded this, if by saying that no Man hath Authority to make Laws in the Affairs of Conscience, he had meant that no Man hath independently on Christ an Authority to make Laws? It is manifest that he could not; For it is certain, and his Lordship will doubtless own, that independently on Christ, there is in any Man or Men, not only no absolute Authority to make Laws in Affairs of Conscience, but no Authority at all.

It is evident then, that his Lordship by saying that no Man hath Authority to make new Laws, must mean that Christ hath given no Man Authority to make new Laws; and this the very manner by which his Lordship hath every where expressed himself, does alone sufficiently shew. Christ, says he, hath *left behind him* no Authority. He hath *not lodged* in any Man or Men such Authority, &c; which Terms do naturally import a derivation of Power from Christ. Now seeing his Lordship hath denied this Authority to Men, with respect to ALL Affairs of Conscience or Salvation, and seeing those Indifferent Matters in Religion, about which the Church must have Authority to make

Laws

Laws, or she can have no Authority at all to make Laws; are according to all common Construction, Affairs of that Kind, it plainly follows that his Lordship hath in these Passages denied to the Church, not only an absolute legislative Authority, but all legislative Authority whatsoever.

THERE is one Passage more in his Lordship's *Sermon*, which I think will serve instead of many, and that is to be met with p. 12. *Whoever can add new Laws to those of Christ, equally obligatory, is as truly a King as Christ himself.* In these Words his Lordship has manifestly denied to the Church such an Authority as will empower her to make Laws which shall in any Case, or under any Circumstances, be equally obligatory with the Laws of Christ. I say, in any Case, or under any Circumstances, for the Proposition you see is universal, and without Limitation. Now I think it is plain, even to Demonstration, that either the Church must have an Authority to make Laws, which, under some Circumstances, shall be equally obligatory with the Laws of Christ, or that she has no Authority to make any Laws at all. For whatever Authority the Church has, it is derived from Christ; consequently Circumstances may so happen, that those Laws which she enacts by Virtue of that Authority, shall oblige as much, as if those same Laws were enacted immediately by Christ; because Circumstances may so happen, that disobedience to those Laws, shall imply disobedience to Christ. For if Circumstances can never so happen, that disobedience to Laws enacted by the Church shall imply disobedience to Christ, it is manifest that Christ hath not lodged in the Church any legislative Authority.

BUT what, you will ask, are those Circumstances which being put, disobedience to Laws enacted by the Church, will imply disobedience to Christ? I answer; those very same Circumstances, and no other than those, which must concur to render any Laws enacted by Men obligatory. These Circumstances are, 1. That the Subjects either do understand, or are capable of understanding who those Persons are, who are set over them as Legislators. 2. That they also do know, or may, if it be not their own fault, know, that the Laws enacted by them are such, as they are empower'd to enact by Virtue of that Power or Authority which is lodged in them. Without these Circumstances, I say no Laws made by Men can possibly oblige; but with them Laws made by the Church, as well as all other Laws made by Men, must oblige, if the Church has any Authority to make Laws at all, and that equally with Laws enacted by Christ immediately. For that they do at all oblige, is owing to Christ's Authority; now if these Laws do oblige by Virtue of Christ's Authority, to disobey them, must be to disobey Christ's Authority.

HAD his Lordship only said, That whoever can add new Laws to those of Christ, which shall be always or to all Persons upon whom they are imposed, equally obligatory, he is as truly a King as Christ himself, his Assertion would have been true. For here indeed lies the main difference between the Authority of Christ, and the Authority of the Church, which makes the one absolute, and the other not so. When once I am satisfied that Christ has commanded any thing, I obey without delay: Because Christ being Supreme Legislator, and consequently there being no Laws superior to his, by which his Laws ought to be judged of, it must be sufficient to induce an Obligation upon me to do a thing, that Christ has commanded it. But it is not so with respect to the Church. She receiveth all her Authority from Christ, and must therefore exercise it in Subordination to Christ. Her Laws therefore must be compared with the original Law of Christ, to see whether she doth not transgress the bounds of that Authority which Christ hath reposed in her. If I cannot satisfy my self of this, her Laws, though, in themselves, they be never so rightfully made, cannot possibly oblige me; but if I am, or may be satisfied

of this, they certainly will, as much as any Law of Christ's own immediate appointment; and therefore though it be true to say that Laws made by the Church, will not always oblige as much as the Laws of Christ, yet to say (as his Lordship hath in effect said) that they never can, is not true, nor can be maintained as such, without denying that the Church hath any Authority.

By this time therefore I think it is manifest, that his Lordship hath in his *Sermon* denied to the Church all Authority of making Laws. I am very well aware that he does there in some places argue against an *absolute Authority to make new Laws*; against a *Power of adding Laws in such a Sense, as that Christians shall be indispensably and absolutely obliged to obey those Laws*. But if any one will infer from hence, that his Lordship intended to deny to the Church no other Legislative Authority, but an absolute Legislative Authority, he may be deceived. For as I have before observed, his Lordship might very consistently affirm at one time, that the Church hath no Authority, and at another, that she hath no absolute Authority. I grant indeed that upon this foot his Limitation will stand for nothing: And what if I tell you, his Lordship intended it should stand for nothing? With respect to *Interpreters*, the Case is clear beyond exception. *Christ* (says his Lordship) *hath left behind him no visible humane Authority; no Vicegerents who can be said properly to supply his place; no INTERPRETERS upon whom his Subjects are ABSOLUTELY to depend*. And there is not a single Passage in his *Sermon* where the Authority of Interpreting is denied, but it is denied with this express Limitation. And yet in his Answer to the *Representation*, he has denied to the Church not only an *absolute Authority to interpret Christ's Laws*, but *all Authority to interpret*. For speaking of the Apostles he says, that they (*h*) *were so far from being absolute Interpreters of Christ's Laws that they were not AT ALL in any proper sense Interpreters*. And if they had no Authority to interpret, we may very safely conclude it to be his Lordship's Opinion that the Church after them has none; for I presume he will not give more to the Governors of the Church now, than he will allow to the Apostles themselves. Is it hard then to conceive, that he who in one case uses Words without meaning, should do so in another? But why do I build upon Conjectures? I will give you a plain and demonstrative Proof, that his Lordship in this very Instance did mean nothing at all by this Limitation, and that is, that he has in his *Sermon* denied to any of Christ's Subjects Authority to add to the Laws of Christ, without this Limitation. His Words are these: *All his* (Christ's) *Subjects are equally his Subjects, and as such, equally without Authority to ALTER, to ADD TO, or to INTERPRET his Laws, so as to claim the absolute Submission of others to such INTERPRETATION*, p. 30. This Passage is very remarkable upon several Accounts. As 1. That the Paragraph in which it stands, is a recapitulation of the whole *Sermon*, and consequently his Lordship must here be supposed to have expressed his meaning in every particular mentioned, with the greatest exactness. 2. That he here speaks of Laws universally or in general, and not of Laws in relation to Affairs of Conscience, or Salvation. 3. That the Subjects of Christ are declared to have no more Authority to add to the Laws of Christ, than they have to alter them. For 4. There is no Limitation mentioned, but only with respect to Interpretation, which yet it was both easy and natural for him to have mention'd, as well with respect to making Laws, if he had thought that what he had said upon that Point ought to be subjected to any Limitation. What others may think of this I cannot tell; but to me it is so flagrant a Proof, how much his Lordship has play'd with Words throughout this whole Controversy, that I shall take the Courage to assure him once for all, that henceforward I never shall in any Case trust him with such Limitations more.

(h) Sect. 10. p. 54

C H A P. III.

Of JUDICIAL Authority.

THE other principal branch of Ecclesiastical Authority which the Committee charge his Lordship with having denied, is that of *judging, censuring, or punishing*. In answer to which his Lordship says, that, he *hath denied NO Authority of judging, censuring, or punishing, but such an Authority as implies in it a Power to make Decisions, which shall affect the State of Christ's Subjects with respect to the Favour of God.* Answ. to the Repres. Chap. i. Sect. 6. p. 28, 29. This is his general Plea; of the weight of which that we may the better judge let it be observed,

1st. THAT as no Protestant does claim, so it is certain that the Committee has not claimed to the Church such an Authority, of judging, censuring, or punishing, as his Lordship *now* opposes. For the Authority of judging, censuring, or punishing, which his Lordship *now* opposes, is such an Authority, as implies that those whom the Church judges, censures, or punishes, shall therefore be shut out of God's Favour; or in other words, such an Authority as implies, that the Eternal Salvation of others shall depend upon her Judgment. This will be very plain from the following Passages. (i) *I deny——all such Authority (of judging) as can oblige Almighty God to ratify any Sentence in Heaven, passed here on Earth——All such Authority as pretends to throw Men out of God's Favour, by the Determination or Excommunication of Men.* Again, (k) *A Judge in the Case (viz. with respect to the Behaviour of Christians in Points relating to the Favour of God) is one by whose Sentence it is determined whether a Man shall enjoy the Tokens of God's Favour or Displeasure. Thus our Saviour is Judge. He is qualified to pass Sentence——and upon his passing it, the Man's Condition is determined irreversibly. And thus he alone is Judge. For what I affirm of him, I deny of others in the same Sense, in which I affirm it of him, and in no other.* The Authority of judging therefore which his Lordship now says he has denied, and does deny to the Church, is such an Authority only, as shall oblige Almighty God to ratify her Sentence, or by the Sentence whereof a Man's Condition with respect to the Favour of God shall be determined irreversibly.

Now such an Authority as this, I say, the Committee have not claimed to the Church. They have indeed (as it seems to me) supposed, and censured his Lordship as denying, that a judicial Sentence, when it is rightly passed by the Church, does affect Men's Conditions with respect to the Favour of God. But they have not supposed that a Judicial Sentence of the Church passed right or wrong has this Effect; and consequently they have not supposed that God is obliged to execute (*i. e.* always to execute) her Sentence, or that Men's Conditions with respect to the Favour of God, are thereby determined irreversibly. The Passage upon which I build, is *Repres. p. 5.* where the Committee having observed, concerning some Preceding Passages cited from his Lordship's *Sermon*, that *if the Doctrine contained in them be admitted of, there neither is, nor has been since our Saviour's time, any Authority in the Christian Church——not even in the Apostles themselves;* they add, to which Effect his Lordship farther expresseth himself, p. 14. "When they (*i. e.* any Men on Earth) make any of their own "Declarations or Decisions, to concern and affect the State of Christ's Subjects,

(i) Answ. to the Represent. Chap. i. Sect. 9. p. 46.

(k) Ibid. Sect. 7. p. 35.

"with respect to the Favour of God, this is so far taking Christ's Kingdom out of his Hands." — *Which Words* (proceed they) *are not restrained to such Decisions as are inconsistent with the Doctrines of the Gospel, as appears not only from the general Manner in which he hath expressed himself, but from his direct Words, p. 15.* "And whether they happen to agree with him, or to differ from him, as long as they are — Judges without any Interposition from Christ, either to guide or correct their Decisions, they are Kings of this Kingdom" &c. From this Passage it is evident, 1st. That the Committee have censured his Lordship as denying (and therefore did suppose that it ought to be affirmed) that the State of Christ's Subjects with respect to the Favour of God, may be affected by the Declarations or Decisions of Men. Yet 2^{dly}. It is no less evident that they have not censured his Lordship as denying (and consequently did not suppose that it ought to be affirmed) that every Declaration or Decision of Men does affect the State of Christ's Subjects with regard to the Favour of God. For they blame his Lordship that he had not restrained his Words to such Decisions as are inconsistent with the Doctrines of the Gospel; which implies, that had he so restrained them, his Lordship would have denied no more, than what in their Opinion ought to be denied. As this shews that the Committee are here speaking of the Church in general, and not particularly of the Apostles (who neither did nor could make any Decisions inconsistent with the Doctrines of the Gospel) so it does fully demonstrate the Truth of that which I have laid down, *viz.* That in the Opinion of the Committee, a Judicial Sentence passed by the Church, does then, and then only, affect the State of others with respect to the Favour of God, when it is rightly passed. For then, and then only, it is that such a Sentence or Decision is consistent with, or agreeable to the Doctrines of the Gospel.

HIS Lordship, I know, (1) thinks it impossible to be conceived, that a Sentence passed by the Church should have any Effect at all upon the State or Condition of others with respect to the Favour of God. Which point there is no need at present to dispute: Because which way soever it be determined it can be of no Consequence, either with respect to the State and Condition of Christians, or with respect to the main of the Charge. Not with respect to the State and Condition of Christians; for the Committee agree with his Lordship, that Persons unjustly or undeservedly censured by the Church, are notwithstanding that Censure, still in God's Favour. Again; his Lordship agrees with the Committee, that Persons deservedly censured by the Church, are out of God's Favour, only his Lordship ascribes this only to their own Behaviour, whilst the Committee seem in part to attribute it to the Censure of the Church also. Not with respect to the main of the Charge. For

2. THE main Charge of the Committee against his Lordship is, that he hath denied to the Church (m) *ALL Authority to judge, censure, or punish Offenders in the Affairs of Conscience and Eternal Salvation, i. e.* all such Superiority of some in the Church above others, as shall authorize them to examine into the religious Conduct of others, and to pass Sentence upon them judicially. It was thus that the Committee, and particularly the Reverend Dr. *Sherlock*, understood his Lordship: But his Lordship has been pleased (upon what Account he best knows) not thus to understand them, but to turn the Controversy quite upon another Point, which is so far from being to the Purpose, that it makes the whole Dispute ridiculous. (n) His Lordship (says the Dean) *affirms, that Christ is the sole Judge of the Behaviour of his Subjects in the Affairs of Conscience.* — *We say that Christ is not sole Judge.* — *For the Church has a*

(1) See his Reasoning upon this Point, *Ibid.* p. 36, 37.

(m) Represent. p. 4.

(n) Answer to a Letter, p. 56, 57.

Right to judge of the Behaviour of Men with respect to the Laws of Christ. What says his Lordship to this? Why, that (o) *he might have added, if he had so pleased, that every particular Christian has a Right to judge, nay, cannot help judging of the Behaviour of others.* From this, and from the whole of his Lordship's Reasoning upon this Head, it is plain even to the most common Understanding that his Lordship represents the *Dean* as claiming to the Church a Right to judge, in the same Sense, and in that only, in which every private Christian may, and must judge of the Behaviour of others. But does his Lordship think it consistent with any tolerable Propriety of Speech to say, that a Man has a Right to do that which he cannot help doing? Will he say, for Instance, that a Man who has his Senses and his Reason perfect, has a Right to see, or to understand? Why, so it seems: for he says, that (p) *there is A RIGHT in all Christians TO SEE open Wickedness, and TO JUDGE wilful Sin to be contrary to Christ's Laws!* His Lordship might very well be surprized to see a learned Member of the Committee contending with so much Zeal and Warmth, that there are Men who have a Right to judge in such a Sense as this: But it is equally surprizing to me that his Lordship should imagine, that a Right (as his Lordship's Phrase is) to see open Wickedness, and to judge (*i. e.* to esteem) wilful Sin to be contrary to Christ's Laws, was that Right of judging which Dr. *Sherlock* had contended for, in Opposition to him. His Lordship may use Words as he pleases, but till I have it from under the *Dean's* own Hand that he so confounds the Idea's of Things, as to make no difference between Right and natural Power or Necessity, I shall believe that by a Right to judge, he meant a Right to judge; and that when he says, that the Church has a Right to judge, he means that there are some particular Persons to whom, in Contradistinction to all others, it properly belongs to judge. This latter his Lordship saw as clearly as I do; for why else does he say, *he might have added, that every particular Christian has a Right to judge?* And how then could his Lordship mistake him so, as to think that the Judging which he was pleading for, could be any thing else but judging with Authority? Had not the *Dean* as well as his Lordship a Right to understand, that every one must needs see, who has his Eyes open, and judge according to what he sees? And was it possible then that the seeing open Wickedness, the judging or esteeming wilful Sin to be contrary to Christ's Law, and the notorious Sinner unworthy of being acknowledged as a Brother, could be that which was claimed by him as a Prerogative in one Christian above another? I shall not pretend to give an Account of this Part of his Lordship's Conduct. But his Enemies, I fear, will be but too apt to think that all this was contrived on purpose to lead his Reader off from the Point in Controversy, and to pave the Way for a more easy Conquest. For his Lordship is sure to triumph over those who have censured, or shall censure him, as denying to the Church a Right to judge of the Behaviour of others, if by that Right they mean a Right to see open Wickedness, which his Lordship can never be supposed to have denied to any Christian, and which indeed is, properly speaking, no Right at all.

You see by this time what is the true Point between his Lordship and the Committee. His Lordship says he has denied to the Church no Authority of judging, but such an Authority as implies a Right to determine Men's Conditions with regard to the Favour of God. The Committee say that he has denied to the Church all Authority of judging whatsoever, *i. e.* all such Superiority or Pre-eminence of any in the Church above others, as will authorize them to examine into the religious Conduct of others, and to pass Sentence upon them judicially. Now whether his Lordship and the Committee can be brought to an Agreement concerning the Effect of this Sentence, with respect to the Fa-

(o) Ibid. Sect. 7. p. 30.

(p). Ibid. p. 40.

your or Displeasure of Almighty God or not, it matters not much. For if his Lordship has denied to the Church all Authority of judging, the Charge of the Committee will be made good, let their Notions concerning the Nature of that Authority be either right or wrong. This then is the Point now to be tryed.

THAT his Lordship has in his *Sermon* denied to the Church all Authority to judge, censure, or punish others, in the Affairs of Conscience and Eternal Salvation, there is no room to dispute. For p. 11. he says expressly, with respect to Christ's Subjects, that *Christ is himself the sole Judge of their Behaviour in the Affairs of Conscience and Eternal Salvation.* P. 15. That *Christ is himself the sole Judge of his Subjects in all Points relating to the Favour or Displeasure of Almighty GOD.* P. 16. That *no one of them (Christ's Subjects) any more than another, hath Authority — to judge, censure, or punish the Servants of another Master in Matters relating purely to Conscience or Salvation,* and the like. The Question therefore is, whether his Lordship hath not in these Passages denied to the Church all Authority of judging, censuring, or punishing others; or whether to say, that Christ is the sole Judge of the Behaviour of his Subjects in the Affairs of Conscience, &c. be only to say, that none but Christ hath Authority so to judge and censure others, as that the State and Condition of others with respect to the Favour of God, shall thereby be determined irreversibly. His Lordship you see is of Opinion that it is the same thing. For a Judge in Points relating to the Favour or Displeasure of Almighty God, or (which is the same thing) in Affairs of Conscience, he tells us *is one by whose Sentence it is determined whether a Person shall enjoy the Tokens of God's Favour or Displeasure.* But upon what Account does his Lordship affirm this? Upon no Account that I can see, but only because he is pleased to affirm it: for Reason I can discover none. That a Person who can determine whether another shall enjoy the Tokens of God's Favour or Displeasure, is a Judge of Men's Behaviour in the Affairs of Conscience, or in Points relating to the Favour or Displeasure of Almighty God, there can be no doubt: But what his Lordship means is, that none but such a one is a Judge of Men's Behaviour in those Affairs; which is not true, unless there be something in the Notion of *Affairs of Conscience, &c.* which implies, that whoever hath Authority to judge of Men's Behaviour with respect to them, must thereby irreversibly determine their Conditions with respect to the Favour of God. For if the Notion of *Affairs of Conscience, &c.* be such, as that a Man may properly be said to judge of the Behaviour of another with regard to them, though he neither does nor can determine his Condition with respect to God's Favour, it will then be false to say, that none but those who can determine the Condition of others, &c. are Judges in Affairs of Conscience; and consequently his Lordship, by affirming that Christ is the sole Judge of the *Behaviour* of his Subjects in those Affairs, must have said something more, than that none but he hath Authority so to judge his Subjects, as that their Condition with respect to the Favour of God shall thereby be determined irreversibly.

WE are now therefore brought back again to the old Enquiry, *viz.* What are *Affairs of Conscience*? How his Lordship hath explained this Phrase, and how little his Explication suits with his Purpose, has been so fully shewn already, that nothing more needs to be said about it. If his Lordship can persuade any to believe that his Meaning was to prove, that Christ hath given no Man Authority to judge in those Affairs in which no Man possibly can judge, I wish him Joy of such Proselytes. The Number of them, I fancy, will be but small, and I must beg Leave to assure his Lordship that I shall not make one amongst them. I say it again, that all Affairs in which the Consciences, or the Salvation of Men are concerned, are Affairs of Conscience, and Salvation, or, if you please, Points relating to the Favour or Displeasure of God. To affirm
therefore

therefore that no one but Christ hath Authority to judge of the Behaviour of others with respect to these Affairs, is the same as to affirm, that no one but Christ hath Authority to judge of the religious Conduct of others, or of the Behaviour of others with respect to the Laws of Religion; which is the very thing charged upon his Lordship by the Committee.

BUT it will not be fair to pass over the Reasons assigned by his Lordship, to shew that these Passages cannot be understood as denying to Men all Right to judge, nor any other Right, but such as implies a Power of determining other Men's Conditions with regard to the Favour of God: And,

1. His Lordship is pleased to alledge, that seeing he (q) *denies that of Men which he affirms of Christ, and seeing he does it by way of Inference from the Prerogative of Christ, he does not, he cannot mean to deny it of them in any other Sense but that in which he affirms it of Christ* — Without any more ado I shall here join Issue with his Lordship: and I think verily that what he now says, is as plain a Confession of the Fact charged upon him as is possible. For that which his Lordship affirms of Christ is, that he is Judge of the Behaviour of his Subjects in Matters of Religion. What does he mean by this? Why, certainly thus much at least, that he hath Authority to judge, *i. e.* he hath Authority to enquire into the religious Conduct of his Subjects, and to pass Sentence upon them decisively, or in a judicial manner. Now seeing that which he denies of Men is, that they are Judges, and seeing he denies this in the same Sense in which he affirms it of Christ, his Lordship must necessarily be understood as denying it of Men, that they have Authority to judge, or that they have Authority to pass Sentence upon others decisively. What his Lordship hath observed a little before, *viz.* That *Christ is in no other Sense Judge of the Behaviour of Christians* — but as their Condition will and must be determined by his Sentence, will not help him. For, 1st. either he uses the Word *CONDITION* indefinitely, or he does not. If the former, he still denies all Authority to Men to judge or pass Sentence upon others decisively. For by his own Rule he denies to Men all Authority to determine, *i. e.* in any sense or in any respect to determine the Condition of others by their Sentence. But if there be in Men an Authority to pass Sentence upon others decisively, there must be in Men an Authority in some sense or in some respects to determine the Condition of others; because if that Sentence does in no sense or in no respect determine the Condition of others, it is a Contradiction to say that it is decisive. If his Lordship uses the Word *CONDITION* in a definite Sense, as signifying the Condition of Christians with regard to the Favour of God, and would argue from thence that he could be understood as denying to Men no other Authority, but an Authority to pass such a Sentence as shall determine the Condition of others in that respect; I answer, that the Argument will not hold. For the Argument you see is drawn from the Notion of the Word *JUDGE*, which, says his Lordship, ought in reason to be understood in the same Sense when applied to Men as when applied to Christ. I grant that it ought, and I do understand it so when I say, that Christ hath Authority to judge, and that Man hath not Authority to judge, whether I intend hereby to deny that Man hath Authority to determine the Condition of others with respect to the Favour of God, or with respect to any thing else. For the nature of the Sentence passed, and the Effect of that Sentence with respect to the Condition of him upon whom it is passed, do by no means enter into the Notion of Judging; because a Judge is one who hath Authority to pass any Sentence which shall be decisive, and therefore the Word retains its Sense when applied to Persons and Cases where the Sentence, and the Effect of it, are not the same, but different. Thus, for

(q) Ibid. Sect. 9. p. 46

instance, when I say of one Man, whose sole and proper Office it is to determine Men to Life or Death, or to judge in capital Cases, that he is a Judge; and of another, whose Office it is to determine in Matters of Right or Property, that he is also a Judge, I mean the same thing by the Word Judge in both Instances, *i. e.* I mean one who has Authority to pass Sentence definitively. In like manner, when I affirm of Christ, who alone hath Authority to determine Men to God's Favour or Displeasure, that he is Judge; and of Men, who have Authority, though not to determine others to God's Favour or Displeasure, yet to pass Sentence definitively in some other respect; that they are also Judges; the Signification of that Word is manifestly the same, when applied to the one, and when applied to the other. Wherefore as it would be improper, and false even in the same Sense of the Word, to affirm of him whose Office it is to judge in Capital Cases, that he is sole Judge in Civil Affairs, in Opposition to the other whose Office it is to judge in Matters of Right; so it is also improper and false even in the same Sense of the Word, to affirm of Christ that he is sole Judge of the Behaviour of his Subjects in Matters of Religion, in Opposition to the Church, if there be any in the Church whom he has empowered to judge of the Religious Conduct of others, *i. e.* to pass Sentence upon others, which Sentence shall in any Sense, or upon any Account be definitive. But *2dly*, With Submission to his Lordship, I think, that there is a manifest Fallacy in this Assertion. Christ, says he, *is in no other Sense Judge, &c.* What does his Lordship mean by this? If he means that Christ doth actually exercise no other Judgment, than that by which he determines the Condition of his Subjects, with respect to the Favour of God; it is true, but then it is nothing to the Purpose. For the thing to be considered here, I conceive, is, not what Judgment Christ actually doth exercise, but what Judgment he hath Authority to exercise. If therefore this be his Lordship's Meaning, *viz.* That Christ hath Authority to be Judge in no other Sense, but as their Condition with respect to the Favour of God shall be determined by his Sentence, the Proposition is not true: For whatever Authority of judging else there is, or can be conceived to be in the Church, it is originally in Christ, and must be so, because the Church neither has, nor can have any Authority but what she receives from Christ. I leave it therefore to be considered, whether since his Lordship hath affirmed of Christ universally, that he alone hath Authority to judge, he must not according to his own Rule, be understood as denying of the Church universally, that she hath any Authority to judge; or whether, supposing that his Lordship had intended to deny to the Church all Authority of judging, he could possibly have expressed himself more clearly, than by saying, *No one hath Authority to judge others but Christ.*

2. His Lordship alledges farther, That (*r*) if from his asserting Christ to be the sole Judge of his Subjects, you will infer that he denies all Right in any Christian Church to judge and punish Offenders, you may as well, and as justly infer, that he has also effectually excluded the Civil Magistrate from punishing the greatest Malefactors: and that the Committee might have put this as strong under the first Head of the Charge, as under the other. To which I answer, *1st.* That if it were true what his Lordship here supposes, *viz.* That those Passages where he has denied to Men an Authority of judging, censuring, or punishing others, and attributed it solely to Christ, are as strong against the Right of the Civil Magistrate to judge and punish Malefactors, as they are against the Right of the Church to judge, and punish Offenders, I should not scruple to say, that his Lordship has effectually destroyed both. But *2dly*, I will speak more favourably of these Passages than his Lordship, and assure him that I am far from thinking that the Argument from them, is equally conclusive in both Cases, or rather, that it is at

(*r*) Ibid. p. 47, 48.

all conclusive with respect to the Power of the Civil Magistrate, though it does very strongly conclude against the Power of the Church. His Lordship needs not be told that the Authority of the Church (if she has any) to judge, and punish Offenders, and of the Civil Magistrate, stand upon two different Bottoms; That the Office of the latter respects the Good of Human Society as such, and consequently, that if the Actions or Behaviour of Men hurt the Publick Good, the Magistrate has a Right to punish them. Whereas the Church has no Right to concern herself with the Actions of Men, consider'd as affecting the Publick Good. She judges them with a view to Religion only, and punishes the Offender, not as transgressing the Laws of Human Society, but as transgressing the Laws of Christ. Now it is very plain, that the Affairs of Conscience or Religion, which his Lordship so often speaks of in his *Sermon*, must at least be limited to the Affairs of Religion consider'd as such. When therefore his Lordship denies of Men, that they have Authority to judge in these Affairs, this effectually excludes the Church from judging Offenders; because these are the Affairs in which either she has a Right to judge, or she has no Right to judge at all. But it does not therefore follow, that he excludes the Civil Magistrate from a Right to judge Malefactors. Because, though it may be true (I do not say it is true) that the Civil Magistrate has no Right to punish a Malefactor, consider'd as transgressing the Laws of Religion, yet he has a Right to punish him as hurting the Publick Good, or as breaking in upon the Laws of Human Society. This Objection might have been put as strong with respect to the Business of Legislation; but the same Answer will equally serve in both Cases.

3. His Lordship hath said in his *Sermon*, that *Christ* hath left behind him *no Judges OVER the Consciences or Religion of his People*. Upon this Word *OVER*, his Lordship in his *Answer* lays a particular Emphasis, as if it would stand him in great stead. This I gather from hence, that he hath every where taken Care to have it printed in Capitals, which indeed is a very good help to bad Eyes, but how it can help the Understandings of those, who want to be informed what it is that his Lordship means by judging *OVER* the Consciences or the Religion of others, I do not, I confess, so readily apprehend. That which his Lordship would have us believe, is, that an Authority to judge *OVER* the Consciences or Religion of others (*s*) *implies an Authority to make Decisions which shall affect the State of Christ's Subjects, with regard to the Favour of God*; which, for any thing I can tell to the contrary, may (in his Notion of that Phrase) be true. But whether it be so or not, I cannot be certain, till I know what that Notion is, which I am not able distinctly to gather from any thing that he hath said. But whatever it be to judge *OVER* the Consciences or the Religion of others, this we are sure of, *viz.* That it is to do something, which no Man possibly can do. For says his Lordship, (*t*) *there never were, nor ever CAN BE IN THE NATURE OF THE THING, any Christians appointed to rule over other Christians — so as to be Judges OVER their Consciences and Religion*. This is the old Story over again. His Lordship is resolved to have it understood, that he has been all this while disputing against mere Impossibilities. But I must assure his Lordship once more, that I always understood him as opposing an Authority to judge over the Consciences and Religion of others in a possible Sense, and that I never yet met with one Soul, whether Friend or Enemy, that had so much as a Thought of understanding him otherwise. Now the only possible Sense in which one Man may be said to judge over the Consciences or Religion of others, is judging of the outward Conduct or Behaviour of others, with respect to the Law of Conscience or Religion; and to say, that no one but Christ hath a Right to do this, if it be not to deny to the Church all Autho-

(s) Ibid. Sect. 6. p. 28.

(t) Ibid. Sect. 11. p. 63.

rity of judging and punishing Offenders, I must for ever despair of knowing when a thing is denied, and when it is affirmed. But

4. ADMITTING that to judge *OVER* the Consciences or Religion of others, did according to the most obvious and common Acceptation of the Words, imply an Authority to determine the Condition of others with respect to the Favour of God; the Passages where this Phrase is used cannot, to be sure, be of greater Weight than those where this Authority of determining the Condition of others with respect to the Favour of God is denied of Men in expresse Terms. Of this latter Sort there is one Passage to be met with in his Lordship's *Sermon*, and his Lordship thinks it *(u)* but common Justice, that this should be taken in towards fixing his Meaning. That is, his Lordship thinks it just to infer, that because he has in one Place denied to the Church an Authority to determine the Condition of others, with respect to the Favour of God, therefore he has nowhere else denied any other Authority. But I can never think any such Demand from his Lordship to be just, till he will be pleased to write in such a manner, as that we may be assured that he has a Meaning in every thing which he says. I have already shewn from two Instances, that his Lordship has denied Authority to the Church in a limited Sense, when yet in those very Instances, he not only does not own, but expressly denies that she has any Authority. Now whether when Limitations are trifled with at this rate, such Limitations can be any certain Rule whereby to judge of an Author's Meaning, I leave it to any serious and understanding Person to consider.

UPON the whole therefore I conclude; That his Lordship hath denied to the Church, not only an Authority to determine the Condition of others with respect to the Favour of God, but an Authority in any Sense to determine the Conditions of others, *i. e.* All Authority of judging and passing Sentence upon others, definitively. If any one should now ask, what sort of definitive Judgment that is, which I suppose to be in the Church, or in what Sense the Church has Authority to determine the Condition of others; I answer that she hath Authority to determine the Condition of others with respect to External Communion. The Case as I take it is this. Christ hath given to the Governours of the Church, a Right to examine into the Religious Conduct of those under their Care; and when any one of them shall have departed from the Doctrines of the Gospel, either in Faith or in Practice, to declare him unworthy of being owned and received as a Brother. This Declaration or Sentence shall thus far be definitive, *viz.* That the Inferior Clergy shall hereby be obliged to refuse to such a Person all Tokens of Christian Fellowship, and particularly and especially to deny him the use of the Holy Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. And farther; that all Inferiors both Clergy and Laity, shall be bound (so far as the Circumstances of the World will permit) to avoid his Company, unless it be to admonish and make him better. This is what we mean by the Word EXCOMMUNICATION, the use of which will be justified in the second part of this Treatise. In the mean while, his Lordship, as you have seen, allows no such Power to the Church, or if you can yet doubt, you will be fully convinced by a Passage I am now going to produce. The Passage has been taken notice of by the *Committee*, and stands in *Preservative*, p. 85. where his Lordship having declared, that the thing which justified the Protestants in separating from the Papists was their being persuaded that the Popish Doctrines and Worship were corrupt, infers, That *if this were duly and impartially consider'd, it would be impossible for Men to unchristian, unchurch, or declare out of God's Favour any of their Fellow Creatures, upon——any other Consideration than that of a Wicked Dishonesty and Insincerity; of which* (says his Lordship) *in these*

(u) Ibid. Sect. 7. p. 31, 34.

Cases God alone is Judge. To *unchristian* a Man, must mean to declare a Man to have forfeited the Rights of a Christian. To *unchurch* must mean to throw a Man out of the Communion of the Church. And to declare a Man *out of God's Favour* must mean to declare either 1. That he hath forfeited that Favour which God hath promised to Mankind through the means provided in the Gospel; or 2. That he hath forfeited that Favour, which for ought we know, he may extend beyond the Promise of the Gospel. That his Lordship must be understood in the first Sense, will be very obvious if we consider (what will hereafter be sufficiently proved) that in his Account, Sincerity, *i. e.* mere Sincerity entitles a Man to the Promises of the Gospel. The Protestants (says his Lordship in the Case above specified) were justified by the Sincerity of their persuasion, *i. e.* They were justified as Christians, they were entitled to God's Favour by or through the Gospel. Therefore (concludes he) no Man should be declared out of God's Favour, *i. e.* (for so the Argument requires him to say) out of that Favour which God hath promised by the Gospel, upon any other Consideration than that of Insincerity. From hence then give me leave to argue. If no Man ought to be declared to have forfeited God's Favour promised by the Gospel, upon any other Consideration than that of Insincerity; Then the Church ought not to Excommunicate any Man upon any other Consideration. For Excommunication always carries with it such a Declaration, and the Supposition that a Man has forfeited the Favour of God promised in the Gospel, by breaking the Conditions upon which it is promised, is the Foundation upon which the Church proceeds when she *unchurches* any Man, *i. e.* when she throws him out of her Communion. Now if there be but one Reason which will justify the Church in excommunicating; and if of that one Reason God alone is Judge, as his Lordship maintains; the Consequence is undeniable, that the Church ought not at all to excommunicate, unless you will say that the Church ought to excommunicate without a Reason. It signifies nothing here to enquire whether it be true, that none can judge of the Sincerity of Mens hearts but God (which I conceive in all Cases it is not,) for we are at present enquiring after his Lordship's Principles and nothing else. It is his Lordship's Principle then I say, that in the Case now under Consideration, no one is Judge of a Man's Sincerity but God; It is his Principle also that the Church cannot excommunicate, unless she were Judge of a Man's Sincerity; it must therefore be his Principle that the Church has no right to excommunicate; which was the thing to be proved.

CHAP. IV.

Containing Remarks upon his Lordship's Answer to the Representation.

THE Passages hitherto insisted upon are such as have been produced by the *Committee*, as the ground of their Charge; and it appears that according to the plain and natural Construction of them, they carry with them an absolute denial of all Authority in the Church. But were this the whole of the Case, though the Committee would be sufficiently vindicated, yet his Lordship would be somewhat pardonable. To use Words which, according to a nice and accurate construction, express a great deal more than a Man intends, is a failing, which in some degree or other, is common to most Writers; and notwithstanding the Matter treated of by his Lordship, is of such weight and importance, as required him to have been particularly careful not to fall into Mistakes of this kind; I should nevertheless be very ready to admit

of the Plea of Human Frailty on his behalf, could I but find any sufficient Evidence in his Answer to the Representation that he acknowledges any Authority. But upon a serious, and (as I hope) impartial examination of the whole of what his Lordship has said upon this Head, I am verily persuaded, that it is his real Sentiment, that the Church hath no Authority, and consequently that it was in his *Sermon*, his Intention to deny that she hath any. The Reasons why I am thus persuaded, I shall briefly subjoin, humbly submitting them to his Lordship's, and to my Readers consideration.

IN the first place then, I observe that his Lordship hath no where in express Terms owned, that the Church hath any Authority; on the contrary, the most favourable Passages carry with them such an Air of reservedness, as would incline any one rather to believe it to be his Opinion, that she hath none, than that she hath any. At p. 25. (which Passage has been already cited, Chap. 1.) his Lordship, as you may remember, after having said, that he had *denied no Authority, but absolute Authority*, adds, *IF in the Christian Church there be an Authority in Superiors properly so called, i. e.* (for this is what his Lordship means) *an Authority properly so called in Superiors—I am, notwithstanding any thing I have said, as much at liberty to declare for it as themselves.* To the same purpose, Chap. 1. Sect. 17. p. 87. *These Learned Persons can shew us, that there is a Rule, or an Authority properly so called in Ecclesiastical Governours which is not absolute; that there are Rulers, and Judges, in the visible Church, properly speaking, who are not absolute, and that there is an Obligation, properly so called, upon Inferiors, to submit to Ecclesiastical Decisions, which is not absolute, or indispensable; or they cannot. If they cannot; then it can be no Crime I hope, in the Judgment of Christians and Protestants, should it be granted upon this Supposition, that in the Sermon, All Authority, All Rulers, and Judges in the visible Church are laid aside. If they can; as soon as they have plainly fixed this Point; I am full as free as any of themselves, to declare for Rule and Authority; Rulers, and Judges, in the visible Church, notwithstanding all that I have declared against them, &c.* It is very certain I think, that if in Superiors there be not an Authority properly so called, there is in Superiors no Authority; and if there be not in Inferiors an Obligation properly so called, to submit to Ecclesiastical Decisions, there is no Obligation; I will therefore leave it to any one to consider, whether these Passages do not discover in his Lordship a secret Persuasion, that there is not in Superiors any Authority, and that there lies upon Inferiors no Obligation to submit to Ecclesiastical Decisions. For why else should his Lordship so cautiously at every turn, insert the Words properly so called, which had never been used by any of his Opposers? And why should he put the Issue of his Defense, barely upon what the Committee should have to say upon this Subject? Had his Lordship been persuaded that there could be, and was, in the Church an Authority which is not absolute, it would have been natural for him to have said so; for his Lordship, I presume, is not yet arrived to such a Fondness of singularity, as to affect to be thought more Heterodox than he really is, and therefore it must be supposed, that he would have taken the most effectual Method he possibly could, to have removed the Imputation he lay under, of being an Enemy to all Authority; had he not been conscious to himself, that he deserved it. I must farther add, that his Lordship upon this Supposition, ought in justice, to have declared himself in favour of Authority. It is true, the Question between him and the Committee, was, whether he had denied all Authority to the Church or not, and consequently it would have been a sufficient answer to their Charge, if he could have proved that he had denied no Authority but absolute Authority. But had his Lordship no business with any but the Committee? Or was the Screening himself from Censure, the only thing he had to take care about? Certainly it was a Duty incumbent upon him as a Christian and a Bishop, as well to endeavour by all possible means to take away that Scandal which had been given to multitudes of others by his,

his, at least seemingly, strange Doctrines; and I suppose no body needs to be informed, which would have been the most proper way of doing this, to have said positively, that the Church has some Authority, and what that Authority is, or to answer only by Negative Assertions, which any one may safely do, and would indeed naturally chuse to do, who owns no Authority, and has a Mind to deal with more *Caution* than *Sincerity*. His Lordship needs not be told by me, that to throw stumbling Blocks in the way of others, is a Point of which some account will be required another Day. To do it with design is one of the wickedest things in the World; and what is undesignedly done becomes designed, if afterward we do not endeavour to the utmost of our Power to repair the Injury. What less then could have been expected from his Lordship, whose fertile Labours had so plentifully administered to the growth of Libertinism among us, and produced so many rude attacks upon the Church and Clergy, than that he himself should with his own Hands have applied a Remedy to these Evils, by asserting those Rightful Powers (whatever they be) which chiefly through his means had been vilified and set at nought? It is impossible I say, that his Lordship should not have thought himself bound to take these Measures, if he knew that he could do it consistently with his real Persuasion; and therefore this studied Reservedness in the Case, is to me (what I presume it will ever be to all reasonable Judges) a convincing Proof, that in charging him with having denied all Authority to the Church, the Committee charged him with nothing more than that wherewith he knew in his own Conscience he ought to be charged.

THAT there is a Medium between absolute Authority and no Authority, is one of the easiest things in the World to be conceived. But how willing soever his Lordship may be to dissemble it, it is plain that he thinks there is none; the Consequence of which must be, that in his Opinion, the Church hath no Authority. But to do his Lordship justice, I must observe that he hath not altogether dissembled. For we have here and there, even in this Answer to the Representation, in which he pretends to justify himself against the Committee, a Passage or two dropt, which are as full against all Authority as is possible. At p. 337. he declares under the Person of an *Honest Man*, and true *Protestant*, that he *Could not have been of this Church, (i. e. of the Church of England) if the Decisions of Humane Authority properly so called, could have claimed the Regard of Christians*. At p. 312. he lays about him most vehemently against all Authority, as *the greatest and most irreconcilable Enemy to Truth, that this World ever yet found out, since it was in Being*. Amongst the many Mischiefs laid to its Charge, this is one viz. That it is an *Enemy to all Reformation*, and that it *contests with the Church of England the Foundation upon which it stands*. And this it seems, will for ever, and every where be the effect, whether it be exercised in a greater degree, or in a less; for he says, that *the calling in the Assistance of mere Authority, even against trifles in Religion, will by insensible degrees, come to the very same issue that it has been ever hitherto seen to end in*. So that it seems his Lordship is not for calling in the Assistance of Authority in any Case where Religion is concerned; nor would he have any regard paid to the Decisions of Humane Authority properly so called, and that because if any regard be paid to such Decisions, it must destroy the very Foundation upon which the Church of England stands! He that will not accept of this, as a plain Declaration against all Church-Authority, let him trust; but I fancy, had his Lordship placed these Passages in the same view, with those wherein he has pretended to excuse himself, by saying that he had denied no Authority, but absolute Authority, there would have been very few Readers so dim Sighted, as not immediately to have discovered the Grossness of the Fallacy.

To proceed now from Generals to Particulars. There are (as I have already shewn) but Two Instances of Authority specified by the Committee. The

one is a Right to make Laws in indifferent Matters relating to Religion and the Worship of God. The other a Right to judge Offenders, and to exclude them from her Society. And both these his Lordship has, I think, given us very plain Proofs that he disowns. For,

i. As to the Power of *Legislation*, he says expressly, that he (x) *knows of NO Church Authority to OBLIGE ANY Christians to EXTERNAL COMMUNION, i. e. he knows of no Power that any in the Church can of Right have over others, to oblige them to any one particular external Manner of religious Worship.* Now 'tis certain, I think, that if there be not in the Church a Power which shall oblige some Christians to some certain external Manner of religious Worship, the Church can have no Right to make Laws relating to religious Worship. For a Right of making Laws on the one hand there can never be, where an Obligation to obey those Laws on the other can never follow. What his Lordship presently adds, that there is not *any thing to determine Men (to external Communion) but their own Consciences, after the best Use of their own Faculties,* I was at first much puzzled to understand. For this in some Sense is true, and withal very consistent with supposing a Power in others to oblige to external Communion. For upon Supposition that Christ hath vested any Men in the Church with this Power, it is my own Conscience or Judgment that must determine me, whether those who take upon themselves to impose upon me Terms of Communion, are those Persons. Again, seeing this Power of imposing Terms of Communion is limited to indifferent Matters, it is my own Conscience or Judgment also that must determine me, whether the Terms imposed by them be lawful or not. So that you see I am all this while determined to external Communion wholly by my own Conscience, that is, it is my own Judgment alone which informs me, amidst the Variety of external Methods of religious Worship, which of them I am obliged to follow. But seeing his Lordship had so fully declared against all Church Authority to OBLIGE others to external Communion, in the former Part of the Sentence, I soon began to suspect that something very different from this must be meant by the latter. And that which most readily offered it self to me was this, *viz.* That his Lordship, by saying that Men are to be determined to external Communion wholly by their own Consciences, would give us to understand, that Christians are at Liberty, without any Regard had to the Injunctions of their Spiritual Governours, to join themselves to any Communion that they themselves shall most approve of, and that even though the Terms of Communion imposed by them may lawfully be complied with. I was much confirmed in this Suspicion upon recollecting an Observation of his Lordship upon the 20th Article of our Church, which his Lordship hath so explained as to set all Christians upon an equal Foot, and to take away all Authority in one above another to fix and determine the external Manner of religious Worship. The Article declares, that *the Church hath Power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and Authority in Controversies of Faith.* These Words his Lordship (y) *begs may be interpreted consistently with the stated and constant Professions of the Reformers, so as not to destroy the Reformation, nor the main Design of those who drew it up.* A very reasonable and necessary Rule of Interpretation without doubt! And to shew you how religiously he himself was resolved to observe it; he goes on forthwith to interpret them in a manner utterly inconsistent both with the Design, the Professions, and Practice of the Reformers! *Let it, says he, be remembered, that THE CHURCH having before been defined to be "a Congregation of faithful Men (that is, Believers) in which the pure Word of " God is preached, &c."* — *Whatever is affirmed of the CHURCH, or THE AUTHORITY of the CHURCH, must be supposed to be affirmed NOT*

(x) Ans. to the Repres. Chap. 1. Sect. 22. p. 112.

(y) Ibid. Sect. 16. p. 84, 85.

OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSONS, but of the WHOLE CONGREGATION, which is declared to be THE CHURCH. Must it so? Why then, since it is affirmed of the Church, that it hath Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, the Meaning of this must be supposed to be, not that any particular Persons in the Church have a Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, but that the whole Congregation has this Power. Is not this now what I said, viz. That his Lordship hath taken away all Authority in one Christian above another to prescribe Laws for the external Manner of religious Worship? Can any thing be more plain, than that he allows a Liberty to any Number or Congregation of Christians, to fix upon such Rites and Ceremonies by mutual Agreement, as they shall think fit? But if his Lordship must needs call in Advocates to support his Opinion, let him go to the *Independents*, and not pretend to shelter himself under the venerable Names of our Reformers, who, 'tis certain, did not proceed upon such Maxims as these. The whole Body of these Articles (as the Title of them specifies) were set forth in order to the avoiding Diversities of Opinions, and for the establishing of Consent touching true Religion. The 20th Article in particular was manifestly intended to inform the People of the Authority of their lawful Governours to prescribe to them Rites and Ceremonies, hereby to prevent that Confusion which must necessarily have arisen, if every Man had been left absolutely to his own Liberty in this Case, and to establish throughout the whole Nation one regular and uniform Manner of religious Worship. This Article therefore is so far from teaching that particular Persons in the Church have not Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, that the plain and necessary Construction of it is, that they have. If his Lordship will persist to maintain the contrary, I must desire him to give me the Sense of that part of the 34th Article, wherein it is declared, that *whoever through his PRIVATE JUDGMENT willingly and purposely doth openly break the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, ought to be rebuked as he that offendeth against the common Order of the Church*. I must also desire him to inform me what sort of Authority that must be, which all Christians have in common one with another; and likewise, upon what Foot the Bishops and Clergy of this Nation went, when they settled an Ecclesiastical Government among us, and did themselves prescribe Rites and Ceremonies to the People.

By this time I suppose my Reader is fully satisfied, that I do not wrong his Lordship, when I say, that his Design in teaching that Men are to be determined to External Communion wholly by their own Consciences, was not to guard them only against an absolute Submission to all imposed Terms of Communion, but to set them loose from all manner of Regard to the Injunctions of their Spiritual Governours, as having no Right to settle the External Modes or Circumstances of religious Worship. And after this, I do not wonder to find his Lordship every where treating outward Order and Decency in the Worship of God, with the utmost Contempt. (2) *Alas!* says he, *all this proceeds from our poor worldly Notions of Order and Decency — If all Christians do not say Prayers at the same particular Minute — If all do not fast — at the same time of the Year, and upon the same Day of the Week — If some Christians kneel when others stand, or stand when others kneel — All this, in all the infinite Variety of it, is called — a Breach of the Order of Christ's Church*. So that it seems, to suppose that the Order of Christ's Church does at all consist, in Christians praying or fasting at the same time, or in their being uniform in the same Gesture of standing or kneeling, in their Religious Assemblies is a poor worldly Notion of Order and Decency, and as disagreeable to the Will of God, and of Christ, as the World it self is from which it is taken. These are his own Words — But it would be endless to take notice of every Particular. Read over the whole Section, and see if you can any where find

(2) Chap. 3. Sect. 3. p. 282.

a more bitter (though fly) Invektive against Rites and Ceremonies in Religion, in the Writings of the most rigid *Dissenter*. One thing I cannot forbear to take notice of, which is, that that famous Text of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 14. 40: which has ever been hitherto interpreted as commanding outward Order and Decency, his Lordship has treated after the same manner that he has treated the XXth Article of our Church, *i. e.* he has endeavoured to explain it away. (a) St. Paul, says he, *indeed speaks of Decency and Order in Assemblies of Christians; but in what Points——it is worth while to consider. He exhorts Christians in their Congregations, not to interrupt one another in their Preaching or Propheying, but to speak one after another, without which Restraint upon themselves, one End of their assembling together would be wholly frustrated.* And this it seems is all. It is not my business at present to dispute this Point with his Lordship, what I produce the Passage for, is only to shew his good will to Order and Decency; and I think it bespeaks somewhat worse than an indifferency towards it, when a Man cannot forbear to pervert one of the plainest Texts in the whole Bible, for no other Reason that I can see, than because it speaks in Favour of it. The name of outward Uniformity I perceive is become his Lordship's peculiar Aversion. Even under the most favourable Circumstances that can be put, he has not one good Word to bestow upon it. *All that Uniformity in the different Congregations of the same Land, which is the Effect of a willing Choice, and the Result of Judgment and Conscience, I shall ever esteem——Esteem? How? Why, to as high a Degree as it can claim.* And how high this is, you may judge by the Reason his Lordship has been pleased to give us why he esteems it, which is indeed very extraordinary, and deserves your especial Notice. It is then, *because whilst it is so procur'd, it can never either injure Civil Society, or destroy good Learning and true Philosophy!* That is to say, his Lordship esteems outward Uniformity because it does no Hurt! I should have been glad he would have told us of any Good it does, and then I would have believed him to have been sincere in what he professes. But as it is, I can look upon this seeming Commendation of outward Uniformity, no otherwise than as a good genteel way of abusing it. For I can scarce believe his Lordship to be of so easy a Disposition, as to place any part of his Esteem upon Things, which according to his own Account of them, are nothing worth. If it be considered farther, that all this is spoken of such an Uniformity as is *the Effect of a willing Choice, and the Result of Judgment and Conscience* (which Language, by this time, I suppose, you may be able to understand) you may from hence easily guess what he thinks of an Uniformity procured by, and maintained in Obedience to Human Authority. But there is no room for Conjectures in the Case. His Lordship tells us plainly a very few Lines after, that *to insist upon these (i. e. outward Order and Decency) by Virtue of mere Authority in some, is——contrary to the professed Design and Declarations of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.* All Authority is mere Authority; and I should desire no stronger Proof that *Christ* hath given to none Authority to make Laws relating to Order and Decency, if it were true, that to insist upon Order and Decency by Virtue of Authority in any, were contrary to the Design and Declarations of the Gospel.

AND now after such plain Declarations as these against all Human Authority, even in Indifferent Matters; and such contempt thrown upon Rites and Ceremonies appointed for Order and Decency in the Worship of God; I am no longer at a loss to know, what his Lordship's Notions both of Uniformity and Conformity are. And I think, I see very plainly, what that *Gaudy Figure dressed out by modern Fancy and Imagination* is, which gives his Lordship so much Offence, and which (as he insinuates) is now mistaken for the only true Original Church of England.

(a) Ibid. p. 290.

2. WE are now come to the other Instance of Authority, mentioned by the Committee viz. The Authority of Judging and Censuring Offenders. As to which, that which his Lordship has been pleased to declare for, is (as you have seen in the foregoing Chapter) *a Right in all Christians to see open wickedness; and to judge wilful Sin to be contrary to Christ's Laws, and the notorious Sinner unworthy of being acknowledged by them as a Brother.* That is, (as his Lordship expresses himself a little before) he declares, that *(b) every Man will judge him to be a Murderer, who takes away his Neighbours Life unjustly; and him to be an uncharitable Man, who never does an Act of Charity; and every Christian has a right to shew his Sense of these Open Sins.* But that this is not that Right of judging which is claimed by the Church of England, is manifest. For as his Lordship confesses, and Reason tells us, this judging is not at all *Authoritative, either so as to be peculiarly lodged in any one part of Christians over another, or so as at all to affect the Salvation of the Person thus judged, and his Condition as to the Favour of God.* His Lordship therefore here owns Judging, but not an Authority of Judging. But the Judging I am now speaking of, is an Authority of Judging, i. e. it is a Power supposed to be lodged in some Christians over others, to judge of their Behaviour, and to pass Sentence upon them decisively; not indeed so as to determine the Condition of those others, with respect to the Favour of God, but so as to determine their Conditions with respect to external Communion, as has before been explained. The Question being thus stated, we must next see what his Lordship's Opinion is, concerning such an Authority as this; and though he has not declared himself so plainly upon this Point, as he has upon the former, yet he has I think, given us sufficient Reason to believe, that he owns no such Authority. For,

1. His Lordship designedly endeavours to conceal his Opinion as to this particular. This you have already seen in part, and may more fully be convinced of by what he says p. 47. *IF to deny all such visible Humane Authority in judging, as can affect the Salvation of Men——be to leave the Church without any visible Humane Authority to judge——I confess I have done it.——But if THEY hold any Authority besides this; or if they maintain that there may be Authority or Right to judge——in quite another Sense——then THEY cannot THEMSELVES conceive the Passages cited by them, to tend to subvert ALL Government and Discipline in the Church of Christ.* You see here again that his Lordship puts the issue of the Debate wholly upon what *THEY* (the Committee) will affirm, concerning the Authority of Judging. But why so? It may reasonably be demanded of his Lordship, to give an account of this part of his Conduct. The only Account that I am able to give of it, is, that he owns *NO* Authority of Judging either in the Sense in which alone he pretends to have denied it, or any other, and that therefore he could not honestly have declared his Opinion, without confessing the thing laid to his Charge. I am the more confirmed in this, by the manner wherein he has managed this part of the Debate against the Dean of Chichester. The Dean had said that *the CHURCH has a Right to judge of the Behaviour of Christians, with respect to the Laws of Christ,* manifestly meaning thereby, that the Church hath Authority, to determine the Condition of her Members, with respect to external Communion. In answer to this, the Bishop supposes him against common Sense and Reason, to be contending for a sort of Judging, which is not Authoritative, and then tells him, that he contradicts nothing which he has affirmed. And let any one judge, whether this altering the State of the Question, could proceed from any other Cause, but the utmost unwillingness to declare his Opinion? And what could be the Cause of this unwillingness, but an inward conviction that he owned no such Authority, as the Dean was contending for, in opposition to him?

(b) Chap. 1. Sect. 7. p. 39.

2 THE Case of the incestuous *Corinthian* as determined by St. Paul, which has ever been thought a decisive Argument for such an Authority as I am now speaking of, his Lordship (after his usual manner) has taken some Pains to shew, to be nothing to the purpose. (c) *I Question*, says he, *whether any thing can certainly be argued from the proceedings of St. Paul and the Corinthian Church in this Case, (i. e. in the Case of the Incestuous Person) but where all Circumstances are parallel*——Nor do I know of any sort of Excommunication ordinarily practiced, either in this, or any other Churches, which can be justified by it. Judge here again, how well affected that Man must be to a Cause, who will endeavour, and that without any manner of occasion given him, to smother the most considerable Evidence it has on its side. I say the most considerable Evidence, for that it is an Evidence and a good one too, I hope to shew you in another place. In the mean while I proceed to observe,

3. THAT his Lordship, if I understand him rightly, has taught several Things inconsistent with this Authority of Judging. To make you sensible of which, I must premise, that if an Authority of Judging be, as we suppose, peculiarly lodged in some Christians over others, *i. e.* in the Governours of the Church, it follows plainly that none of the inferiour Clergy ought to refuse to any Christian the usual Tokens of Church Communion, in Opposition to the Judgment and Direction of their Superiors; and that no private Christian ought to treat or use another as excommunicate, who is not by the Governours of the Church first declared to be so. Because to allow of the contrary Practice, is to put the Power of Judging into every Christian's Hands; upon which Supposition it must cease in any respect to be authoritative. And yet this Practice his Lordship seems plainly to allow. For he says, he (d) does not doubt but the Nature and Usefulness of the thing is a sufficient Justification of ANY Christians, who set a Mark upon the open Immorality and Wickedness of any professed Christians, **EVEN BY REFUSING TO THEM THE PECULIAR TOKENS AND MARKS of Christian Communion, AS WELL AS by avoiding their Company.** The peculiar Tokens or Marks of Church Communion, considered as distinct from keeping Company, are the joining together in all outward Acts of religious Worship, and more especially in the Use of the Holy Sacrament. The refusing to another these Tokens, must signify either, 1st, the refusing to administer to another these Tokens: Or, 2^{dly}, The refusing to join with him in the Participation of these Tokens, when administered by the Hands of others. His Lordship cannot be understood to speak in the former Sense, because he very well knows it is not the Office of every Christian to administer the Tokens of Church Communion. And in the latter Sense his Meaning must be, that it is lawful for any private Christian to refuse to join in religious Worship with an open Sinner, whether he be declared excommunicate or not, provided he himself thinks or judges him to be unworthy. Which Assertion, as it effectually destroys all Authority of Judging in the Church of Christ, so it does no less effectually justify one Plea of the *Dissenters* for separating from our Communion, which all Divines, and some even among the *Dissenters* themselves, have declare to be unjustifiable.

AGAIN, his Lordship declares, that (e) *a Right to judge that an open Sinner is not worthy of being owned as one of the Christian Society, he has never denied to every Christian, much less to those whose Office it is to administer holy things, and who therefore must judge FOR THEMSELVES, that it is not proper for them to acknowledge as Christians those who openly and notoriously live in a Violation of the Moral Laws of Christ.* The Sense of which Passage seems to be this, That every Clergyman is to be his own Judge what Persons it is proper for

(c) Ibid. p. 38

(d) Ibid. p. 39.

(e) Ibid. Sect. 9. p. 50.

him to admit to the holy Communion, and what not. This is plain, because he applies this particularly to the Case of administering the Sacrament, in the very next Words. This Assertion therefore leaves the Power of Excommunication equally in all Clergymen, and in all Christians; which how contrary it is to the Usage of all Churches, and particularly to the Usage of the Church of England, no one, I suppose, needs to be informed. We have a Rubrick indeed which authorizes every Curate to repel from the holy Communion all *open and notorious Livers*, all *who have done Wrong to their Neighbours*, and all *betwixt whom he perceiveth Malice and Hatred to reign*. But this reaches no farther than to one single Act of Refusal; for the same Rubrick puts in this Proviso, that *every Minister so repelling any* — *shall be obliged to give an Account of the same to the Ordinary within Fourteen Days*. Give an Account to the Ordinary? For what End? Why (says *Can. 27.*) *to signify unto him the Cause of his refusing him, and therein (for the future) to obey his Order and Direction*. So that, according to the Constitutions of our Church, the Ordinary, and not the Curate, is to judge finally and decisively who is to be admitted to the holy Communion, and who not. How his Lordship will reconcile his Doctrine with this, and with that Authority which he is bound as a Bishop to exercise in this Case, I shall leave him to make out.

C H A P. V.

Containing some Observations upon diverse Writers, who have appeared as his Lordship's Advocates in this Controversy.

HAVING taken notice of such Passages in his Lordship's Books, as seem to me to be most material; it will be a very proper Conclusion to this Part of the Debate, to shew the Reader what has been offer'd on this Head, by some others who have appeared as Advocates in his Cause. Not that I think his Lordship answerable for every thing that has been said by Writers of this Sort. But I think it a very reasonable Presumption, that in all Material Points, his Lordship and his Friends are in one and the same way of thinking. His Lordship will not allow Us to understand what he means; to suppose that THEY have mistaken him as much as we, would be to give such an account of his Conduct, as his Lordship would have no reason to thank me for. I shall therefore take it for granted that if these Gentlemen have declared plainly that there is no Authority in the Church, it is his Lordship's persuasion that there is none; for which there is this farther Reason, which with me is of great weight, *viz.* That some of them have been recommended to the World by his Lordship as *very able hands*, and that he hath no where given any sort of Notice that they have carried his Doctrines too far.

It must be remembred that when we say the Church hath Authority, our meaning is that some particular Persons in the Church have Authority. Thus much the Notion of Authority implies. Now this Authority has been consider'd both as Legislative and Judicial. *Legislative*, as these Persons are supposed to have a Power of making Appointments in Indifferent Matters, relating to Order and Decency in the Worship of God; which Appointments, under proper Circumstances, shall be binding upon the Consciences of others. And *judicial*, as they are supposed likewise to be empower'd to determine upon what Conditions Men shall be admitted to, or excluded from external and visible Communion. Who those Persons are who are vested with this Authority, it is not at present needful to enquire; nor can it indeed be any part of the Question with those, who deny that there are any such particular Persons in the Church. And that

this is the Case of some of the most considerable Writers, who have appear'd in his Lordship's Defence I am now to shew. I shall confine this Enquiry to the first branch of Authority only, viz. that of Legislation; for when this is once destroyed, the other must fall of course.

THERE are two Methods supposeable in this Case, both which stand upon the Foot of Authority. The first is, that Christ did originally appoint different Orders of Men in his Church, some Superiors, others Inferiors; some with Authority, others under Authority. The other is, That he left all Christians upon the same foot of equality, but under a Liberty to chuse out from among themselves by common consent some particular Persons, whose appointments in these Cases should be a Law to the whole Body. These two Schemes I say both suppose Authority, and only differ with respect to the way or method by which Authority is supposed to be created. But without either the one or the other, Authority cannot subsist. For if neither Christ hath appointed, nor the Church doth appoint, any particular Persons to make Laws which shall oblige others, there are then no such Persons in the Church, or in other Words the Church hath no legislative Authority.

It lies upon me then to shew that his Lordship's Friends have denied both these ways of conveying Authority to particular Persons in the Church; than which nothing is more easy. For as to the first Mr. Pyle tells us, that (f) *the chief Texts whereon is pretended to be built an expresse Commission from Christ to PARTICULAR PERSONS, as CHURCH-GOVERNOURS, have been consider'd by the Bishop and his Advocates, and shewn to have no relation to such kind of Power:* which Words in common construction must be supposed to carry with them a Declaration, in his own and in his Lordship's Name, that Christ never gave any such Commission. Accordingly he declares a few Lines after, that the reason of our obeying such (for so he speaks, though very improperly upon his own Principles) *is not because of any expresse Charter given them by Christ, as religious or Spiritual Governours, to make Appointments in indifferent Matters.* Again: the (g) *chief mistake*, he tells us, *lies in imagining that Men's Obedience is due to it (i.e. to a Church Law) by vertue of a positive Commission given by Christ to CERTAIN MEN as Spiritual Rulers.* And (h) elsewhere speaking of *Spiritual Powers by derivation from Christ*, he says, they are *Dreams*. The Author of a Pamphlet under the Name of *Phileleutherus Cantabrigiensis*, treads in the same Path: (i) *It doth not*, says he, *any where appear that God has given the Power of making Laws, or Rules, about the Circumstances of his Worship and Service to any PARTICULAR PERSONS among Christians; therefore no Persons have a divine Right to this Power.* And this Notion also is supported by Mr. Burnet, who speaking of the Clergy (to whom Christ must be supposed to have given at least a share in this Power, if he hath at all given any such Power) says, (k) *that they are appointed ONLY, to TEACH, to EXHORT, and ASSIST others in the Performance of their Duties.* That they have any Authority he denies: For this, says he, *implies Command and Dominion, which St. Peter expressly forbids to Pastors to exercise.* This first way then of deriving Authority you see is directly shut out.

WELL then; do they admit of the Second? Nor this. Mr. Pyle indeed somewhere talks of (l) *a Power of Lawmaking* which he supposes to be lodged in the whole body (or Church) and says that *the Power of executing their Laws may be DELEGATED to particular Hands;* which Words I profess my self not able to understand. But thus much I do understand (and it is enough for my purpose

(f) Fourth Letter p. 67. (g) P. 69. (h) P. 88. (i) Essay on imposing Articles. p. 7. (k) Second Letter to Mr. Law. p. 108. 302. (l) P. 88.

at present) viz. That the Power which Mr. Pyle here says may be delegated from the whole Body into particular hands, is not the Power we are now inquiring after, to wit, the Power of *making* Laws, but the Power of *executing* Laws already made; and I am farther very certain that Mr. Pyle cannot admit of any such delegated Legislative Power consistently with what he elsewhere maintains, viz. (m) *That there cannot in the Nature of the thing, be a proper Human Legislative Power at all even in the External of Religion.* For if there cannot in the Nature of the thing be a Legislative Power in the External of Religion, it will be impossible that any particular Persons in the Church should have such a Power, either by delegation from the whole Body or any other way. Mr. Burnet is of the same Mind. He doth not say indeed that a Legislative Authority in the Church is impossible in the Nature of the Thing, but that in Fact there is no such Authority he declares in as plain Words as can be. For having cited his Lordship as affirming, that *no Men have a Power of Legislation in the Kingdom of Christ*; he says that (n) *the Doctrine that must be maintained by those who oppose his Lordship* (and which he thinks cannot be maintained consistently with truth and good Sense) is, *That Men, fallible Men, have a Power of making Laws in Christ's Kingdom, so as to BIND the Consciences of his Subjects.* This Passage is so much the more to be taken Notice of, because it not only shews it to be Mr. Burnet's Opinion that there is no Authority in the Church, but also that he understood his Lordship, as the Committee understood him, to wit, as pleading against all Authority. For as I have more than once taken Notice upon this Occasion, if there be not in the Church a Power of making Laws, which under proper Circumstances shall bind the Consciences of Christians, the Church is absolutely without Authority.

To conclude; by what I am able to gather from the whole of what these Writers have said compared together, their Opinion seems plainly to be this, viz. That all Christians are at liberty, notwithstanding any Preeminency or Superiority, which one has above another either by express Commission from Christ, or by Deputation from the Church, to join together any Number of them, in the use of such outward Forms of Religious Worships, as they themselves shall best approve. I say *any Number* of them; for to suppose that the Will or Consent of any Number of Christians in one way of Worship, binds or obliges others to the use of the same way, is to call in that Legislative Authority which these Writers expressly disown. For whatever it be by which a Man is bound, that is a Law: And Authority will be Authority, let it be lodged in the hands of many, of a few, or of one. Nor doth it hinder that these Men, when speaking of the Church, are wont to make use of the Terms, *Law, Authority* and the like. For herein they use a Latitude of Expression, which may serve to impose upon unwary Readers, but which those who accustom themselves to consider will find, carries a great deal more with it than they really intend. *Authority* with them signifies in this Case, no more than that *Right* or *Power* which every Man has, in reference to his own Conduct in Religious Matters; and by *Laws* they mean nothing else, but those *Rules* or *Orders* concerning God's Worship, which have been settled by mutual Consent and Agreement, and which in propriety of Speech are no Laws to any, but to those who are willing to make them such to themselves. This they own. For, says Mr Pyle, (o) *In the Church consider'd purely as Christian — what we call AUTHORITY, may as well, perhaps MORE JUSTLY be stiled a BOUNDEN DUTY, or OBLIGATION.* And Mr. Burnet, speaking of the Right of the Clergy, says, (p) *I cannot call it AUTHORITY properly.* But there is one Passage in this Writer which clears up this whole matter in a very few Words. (q) *When any visible Church or Congregation have (not made a Christian LAW, for*

(m) P. 71.

(n) P. 263.

(o) P. 44.

(p) P. 144.

(q) P. 131.

that they have no Power to do, but) *AGREED* upon any particular Order for their own Edification; it is then a Sin (not against any *LAW* made by that Agreement, for such there can be *NONE* properly speaking; but) against the great Law of *PEACE* and *CHARITY*, to leave that Order without some weighty Reasons. From which Words it is plain; That according to Mr. Burnet, the Orders or Appointments of Christians about the external manner of Religious Worship, are not properly *Laws*; and that the Obligation not to depart from any settled Order without good Reason arises not from hence, that Men are bound by that Order, *i. e.* owe any Submission to those who have appointed that Order; but from the general Law of *Peace* and *Charity*, by which we are many times bound even in those Matters, in which Human Authority neither has nor can have any thing to do.

AND now I will beg leave to ask his Lordship one plain Question. Will he stand by these Doctrines or will he not? If he will not, why, in the Name of God, has he not taken some Opportunity or other, out of those many Occasions which have been offer'd him during the Course of this Controversy, to shew his dislike of them? Why has he not remonstrated against these either mistaken or designing Men, who have appear'd as Interpreters or Defenders of his Writings, and told the World plainly that they have not represented his meaning truly? But alas! his Lordship has given us too much reason to think, that these Gentlemen have fathom'd the very bottom of his Schemes, and that what they speak they speak not of themselves; Mr. Burnet especially, whose Second Letter (from which the Passages above are cited) his Lordship hath (r) set forth in such a manner, that one cannot help suspecting that he was no Stranger to the Contents of it before it was published. And if this be the Case, it may perhaps be worth his while to consider, how he will be able to justify his Conduct to God and to the World. For these are the very Doctrines, which were charged upon him by the Committee; which Doctrines his Lordship hath thought fit to dissemble, and to take occasion from hence to represent the Committee as Setters up of the Popish Claims, of absolute Authority, and indispensable Obedience; whereas it is plain to the Eyes of every one who is but willing to see, that the Charge carries no such meaning, nor any other meaning than what his Lordship, if he wou'd have spoke plainly, must have confessed the Justice of. It wou'd be easy for me by the help of this Clue, which I have now put into the Readers hand, to lead him through all the Labyrinths of his *Sermon* and *Answer* to the *Representation*, and to shew by what a variety of artificial Turns he hath endeavour'd rather to avoid, than to answer the Charge. But thinking that what has been already offered, is abundantly sufficient (so far as it goes) to justify the Committee, I shall stop here and turn to the Second general Head of Accusation.

(r) The Passage is in his Lordship's *Answer* to a late Book written by the Reverend Dr. Sherlock, p. 111, where speaking of Mr. Law, he says, *There have been two Answers published to his Second Letter; and a third coming, from some of the ABLEST HANDS I KNOW OF.* This third Answer is Mr. Burnet's Second Letter; and by his Lordship's way of speaking it shou'd seem, that though Mr. Burnet took the Credit of the Book to himself by setting his Name to it, it was in truth the Work of other hands beside his own.

SECTION II.

Of CHURCH-COMMUNION.

CHAP. I.

Wherein his Lordship's Doctrine concerning SINCERITY is examined, and shewn to destroy all Necessity of CHURCH-COMMUNION in order to Salvation.

THE Second Thing charged upon his Lordship by the Committee is, *That he hath made all Methods of Religion alike with respect to Salvation and the Favour of God, and hereby not only made it (in this respect) an indifferent thing to what Sect or Communion among Christians a Man joins himself, but also render'd all Church-Communion unnecessary to entitle Men to God's Favour.* Which part of the Charge (it must be observed) is not founded upon any thing which his Lordship hath said to this Purpose, directly and in express Terms; but is a Consequence which the Committee have drawn from his Doctrine concerning the availableness of Sincerity to Justification. The Points then to be consider'd are these two, *viz.*

FIRST, What his Lordship's Doctrine concerning Sincerity is? And

SECONDLY, Whether these Consequences do rightly follow from it?

I BEGIN with the first of these, *viz.* *What his Lordship's Doctrine concerning Sincerity is?* And this I think is very fully set forth in one short Passage in *Preservative*, p. 91. where his Lordship, having stated the Case between the Protestants and Papists, and declared that the former were justified in their separation from the latter merely in vertue of the sincerity of their Persuasion, sums up the whole Argument in this general Proposition; *The Favour of God follows Sincerity consider'd as such; and consequently equally follows every equal Degree of Sincerity.*

It must be inquired here in the first place, what we are to understand by Sincerity. Now the Word *sincere* in its true and proper Signification, answers to the Greek Word *Εἰλικρινής*, which signifies *simple, pure, unmixed, undisguised, and without Deceit.* The Holy Scriptures when they speak of *Εἰλικρινεία* as a Christian Perfection, do sometimes oppose it to Uncorruptedness in the Understanding or Judgment. Thus the *Εἰλικρινής Δύναμις* in St. Peter, is a Mind or Understanding untainted with false Opinions, 2 Pet. 3. 1. And St. Paul prays for the Philippians, *that their Love might abound yet more and more in Knowledge and in all Judgment, εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν τὰ ἀγαθὰ, that they might approve things that are excellent, or (as the Words may be render'd) to the trying and discerning the Differences of Things, to the end that they might be (Εἰλικρινεῖς) sincere, and without Offence, Phil. 1. 9, 10.* Sometimes it is opposed to Corruptedness in the Heart or Affections, as 1 Cor. 5. 8. *Let us keep the Feast, not with old Leaven, neither with the Leaven of Malice and Wickedness, but with the unleavened Bread (Εἰλικρινείας) of Sincerity and Truth.* So also 2 Cor. 1. 12. *Our Rejoycing is this, the Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, (Εἰλικρινείᾳ ὁμιλίᾳ) not with fleshly Wisdom, we have had our Conversation in the World.* Where you see Sincerity is opposed to fleshly Wisdom, i. e. to that cunning and de-

ceitful Behaviour, wherewith Men of evil Minds usually cover and conceal themselves. And both Senses seem to be intended *Chap. 2. ver. 17. We are not as many which corrupt the Word of God, but as of Sincerity* (ὡς ἐξ εἰλικυρίας) *but as of God, speak we in Christ*; I know of no other Sense besides these two, in which the Word Εἰλικυρία is used in the Sacred Writings, nor can I find that our Translators have ever used the Word *Sincerity*, but to express this or some other Word of the same Signification. Ἀληθεύειν ἐν ἀγάπῃ, is to be *sincere in Love*, Eph. 4. 15. The pure uncorrupted Doctrines of the Gospel, are the ἄδολον γάλα τὸ λογικόν, *the sincere Milk of the Word*. 1 Pet. 2. 2. To preach Christ of Contention, is to preach him ἐχ' ἀγνῶς *not sincerely*. Phil. 1. 16. Γνήσιον ἀγάπης is the *Genuineness or Sincerity of Love*. 2 Cor. 8. 8. Ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ ἀγαπᾶν is to *love in Sincerity*. Eph. 6. 24. Ἐν διδασκαλίᾳ ἀφθαρσία is *Sincerity in Doctrine*. Tit. 2. 7.

BUT though the Word in the primary and adequate Notion of it implies purity and uncorruptedness of every sort, yet Use has restrained it principally to the latter of these two Significations; and by a sincere Man, we generally mean one who acts without Deceit, Guile, or Hypocrisy. But his Lordship extends the Meaning of it somewhat farther. For by a *sincere* Man, he does not understand barely one who acts without Deceit, Guile, or Hypocrisy, *i. e.* according to the Dictates of his Conscience; but one who acts according to the Dictates of his Conscience, after having used his best and utmost Endeavours to come to the Knowledge of the Truth. I confess I do by no means approve of changing the Common Use and Acceptation of Words, without some great and evident Reason, because it is very apt to lead Men into Mistakes; but his Lordship should have been pardoned this Fault, had he told us plainly and from the very first, in what Sense he intended to use the Word *Sincerity* in the present Controversy. But in this he seems not to have been sufficiently careful. In his *Answer to the Representation*, we are indeed told over and over, that Sincerity supposes the Use of a Man's best Endeavours in order to the acquiring a Right Understanding of his Duty. Thus p. 93. *A Man is always supposed to use his UTMOST ENDEAVOURS ——— and then and ONLY then to be justified by ——— his private Judgment.* Again, p. 95. *SINCERITY cannot be supposed, where a Man does not take ALL PROPER Methods of being rightly informed.* But I can find but one single Passage in his *Preservative* which inforces this Sense, which standing at the End of the Book, leaves every Reader for a while under Prepossessions which he must afterwards be at the Pains to rectify; may be utterly useless to such as are not disposed to attend his Lordship through every step; and will most certainly be so to those who may chance not to be so fond of his Performance, as not to lay it aside before they have perused it thoroughly. This Observation will have the greater Weight, when it is considered, that how strongly soever this Passage may seem to imply, that his Lordship under the Notion of *Sincerity* included a careful and diligent use of the Means of Knowledge, yet his way of arguing implies no such thing, but the direct contrary. His grand Demonstration relies upon this general Maxim, That *no Man can be entitled to God's Wrath which way soever he acts*; which if it be true, a simple Persuasion must be a sufficient Foundation for that Sincerity which justifies. For a Man who is persuaded that this or that is his Duty (whether he has used Means or used none) cannot act contrary to his Persuasion without entitling himself to the Wrath of God. Either then it must be said that a Man may be entitled to God's Wrath which way soever he acts, or else it must be true that he is justified by a Simple Persuasion. At p. 85. we have another Demonstration which labours under the same defect. *What is it that justified the Protestants in setting up their own Bishops? Was it that the Popish Doctrines and Worship were corrupt, or that the Protestants were persuaded in their own Consciences that they were so? The latter without doubt, as appears from this DEMONSTRATION.* Take away from them this Persuasion, they are so far

far from being justified, that they are condemned for their departure; give them this Persuasion again, they are condemned if they do not separate, and consequently (in his Lordship's way of Reasoning) justified if they do. But pray let me ask his Lordship one plain Question. What is that Persuasion concerning the Errors and Corruptions of the Church of Rome, which if you give to a Man, he is condemned if he does not separate? He will answer perhaps, Such a Persuasion as is the result of his best Endeavours. But I say, that in this Case, it is not necessary to suppose the Use of any Endeavours at all; For if a Man be simply persuaded that to join in Communion with the Church of Rome is sinful (which every Man is supposed to be, who is persuaded that her Doctrines and Worship are corrupt) he ought not to join with her whilst he is so persuaded, *i. e.* he ought to separate. Now since his Lordship has declared, That the same Persuasion for which a Man will be condemned if he does not separate, will justify him if he does; and since he cannot deny but that a simple Persuasion is sufficient in the former Case, he cannot (according to his own Argument) deny but that it is also sufficient in the latter. But that which I here Charge upon his Lordship in the way of Consequence only, he has (if I can read) expressly asserted in the very next Passage; in which his Lordship (as he rightly insinuates) has favoured us with the same Demonstration expressed in a different manner. Suppose a Papist, not persuaded of that Corruption, to separate, he is for want of that Persuasion alone Condemned: Suppose a Protestant, or one THOROUGHLY persuaded of that Corruption, to separate, and he is JUSTIFIED in so doing; or not to separate, and he is Condemned. That which his Lordship here expressly declares will justify a Protestant, you see is a thorough Persuasion, *i. e.* a firm and full Persuasion; a Persuasion which shuts out all manner of Doubt or Scruple. Now 'tis evident that a simple Persuasion may be, and very frequently is, of this sort; nay it is observable, that those Men are generally the most stiff and positive in their Opinions, who have taken the least pains to examine them.

His Lordship then in effect asserts thus much, *viz.* That a simple Persuasion will justify a Man who acts according to that Persuasion, as effectually as his acting against that Persuasion will condemn him. Now this is entirely to shut out the Use of Means from the Notion of Sincerity, and his Lordship may call it in at his Peril; for the very Moment it enters, his much boasted of Demonstration vanishes away at the Sight of it. That no Man ought, upon any Account, to act against his Conscience or Persuasion, is a certain and undoubted Truth; but to infer from hence, as his Lordship does, That therefore he is justified if he acts according to it, is ridiculous, if you suppose that we are (as undoubtedly we are) answerable for the Neglect of Means. But concerning the force of this Argument consider'd as such, I shall have occasion to dispute in a more proper Place. For the present we are only stating his Lordship's Opinion. And since I must argue against him, upon such a Sense of his Words as he himself will stand by, or not at all, I will suppose the Notion of Sincerity to consist in this, *viz.* That a Man acts honestly according to the Dictates of his Conscience, after he hath used his best or utmost Endeavours to inform himself rightly. The Question now will be, when a Man may be said to have used his best Endeavours? If by *best Endeavours*, his Lordship means doing every thing that is strictly and physically possible to be done, the Controversy is concerning a mere Nullity. For such sincere Persons there are none, nor (morally speaking) can there be any. But I presume his Lordship will say, that a Man is sincere, who follows his Conscience after having used all such Means as, by the Rules of ordinary Prudence and Discretion, appear to him to be reasonable and fitting. An Anonymous Author, under the borrowed Name of *Silvius* (s) a-

(s) Letter to Dr. Sherlock, p. 24.

grees in this Notion, but then he does not seem rightly to understand the Extent of it. For in his Answer to the *Dean of Chichester's* Objection about the *Impossibility* (as he very falsely terms it) of *converting a Papist upon his Lordship's Principle*; he introduces the *Papist* speaking thus. (1) *Why should I give my self the trouble to consider your Arguments? I am conscious of my own Sincerity, and this you say will excuse me in the sight of God.* To which the *Protestant* is made to answer: *You must quit your Pretensions to Sincerity for the future, if you slight MY Arguments, and reject MY Endeavours to inform and convince you — This is utterly inconsistent with Sincerity; at least according to my Notion of it: For he only is sincere in my Esteem, whose Ear is always open to information, and who continues ever ready and willing to receive new Light and fresh Evidence.* So that it seems, for a *Papist* not to be always ready to listen to the Arguings of any *Protestant*, (I say of any *Protestant*, for *Silvius* makes no distinction) is inconsistent with his being sincere. Now since in this Case, that which is a Rule to a *Papist*, is also a Rule to every body else, consider with your self, I pray, what fine Work here is cut out for us. All Persons, upon pain of forfeiting their Pretensions to Sincerity, must be at leisure to attend to the *Objections* of all *Opposers*; The Consequence of which is, That no Man can honestly be at rest, so long as there are any in the World, who are disposed, Right or Wrong, weakly or wickedly to call his Opinions in Question! This is laying such a Hardship upon Men, as I am confident none ever did, or ever will submit to, nor is there any reason that they should. For the Evidences for an Opinion do many times appear so strong, that a discreet and prudent Man, may not think any further Examination to be at all necessary; and when the Case is otherwise, who will say that a Man is bound to listen to all *Opposers*, when daily Experience shews us, that it is but too common for those to thrust themselves into Disputes, who are, on no Terms, fit to be discoursed with? Upon the present foot then, I think he deserves the Name of a sincere Man, who being directed by the Rules of ordinary Prudence and Discretion, carefully examines such Points of Religion as he thinks are necessary to be examined, and by such ways and means as he judges are most likely to answer the End of his Examination, *i. e.* to bring him to the Knowledge of the Truth.

THUS much I thought it needful once for all to observe concerning the Notion of *Sincerity*. What follows in his Lordship's Proposition will be explained in fewer Words. For by *Sincerity consider'd as such* is naturally to be understood *Sincerity of it self*, *Sincerity alone*, or *Sincerity* abstracted from all other things, in conjunction with which it may be considered. And when he says, that the Favour of God follows *Sincerity*, his meaning is, that *Sincerity* gives a Man a *Right* or *Title* to the Favour of God. This is plain from his own Words. (u) *Either* (says he) *a Man must be INTITLED to Heaven by the perfect Sincerity of his Choice, or else none can have a TITLE to it, but those who are in the right.* Again; (x) *Almighty God puts our TITLE to his Favour upon our present Sincerity.* As to what his Lordship says about *Degrees* of *Sincerity* I make no account of it, because as he hath stated the Notion of *Sincerity*, it will not admit of *Degrees*. For either a Man has used his best endeavours or he hath not. If he has *not*, he is not at all sincere, because *Sincerity* is only when a Man has used his best endeavours. If he *has*, he cannot be more sincere than he already is; because no Man can do *more* than his best. To speak properly then his Lordship's Proposition shou'd have stood thus, *The Favour of God follows Sincerity consider'd as such, and consequently follows Sincerity in all Persons equally, or in the same Degree.* The full Sense and Meaning of which Proposition appears now very plainly to be this, *viz.* That "all Persons who have used their best Endeavours to inform themselves rightly, and act according

(1) Ibid p. 14, 15.

(u) P. 95. Answ. to the Repref.

(x) P. 104. Ibid

"to

"to what they believe, have a right to an equal Share or Degree of the Favour of God."

His Lordship's Doctrine concerning Sincerity being thus explained, I now proceed to the the next inquiry, *viz. Whether the Consequences charged upon it by the Committee do rightly follow.* The Consequences as drawn up by the Committee you may see at large *Repres.* p. 7, 8. where his Lordship in vertue of this Doctrine is charged with having made *all Methods of Religion alike with respect to Salvation or the Favour of God; with having put all Communions upon an equal Foot, without regard to any intrinsick Goodness, or whether they be right or wrong; with referring every Man's Choice of a Communion to his own private Judgment, as that which will justify even the worst he can make; and finally, with rendring all Church Communion unnecessary in order to intitle Men to the Favour of God.* These Consequences might all of them have been expressed by one single Proposition, *That all sincere Persons have a Right or Title to an equal share of God's Favour, whatsoever Method of Religion they follow.* But I chose to make use of the very Words of the *Representation*, that I might hereby give my self the fairer Opportunity of vindicating them against his Lordship's Exceptions. In the mean time I am verily persuaded that there is no considerate Man who will not see, that these Consequences do every one of them naturally and necessarily follow from the Principle above laid down. For if all sincere Persons have a Right to an equal Share or Degree of God's Favour, pray what can it signify as to the Favour of God whether a Man follows this Method of Religion or follows that, provided he be but sincere in that which he follows? To say that the Nature, *i. e.* the intrinsick Goodness of the Method, makes any difference in the Case, is to contradict his Lordship's general Assertion. For if the intrinsick Goodness of the Method must in the least concur to intitle a Man to God's Favour, it is not then true that Sincerity alone will give him this Title. And if the intrinsick Goodness of the Method does not in the least contribute towards the intitling a Man to God's Favour, his Title will be the same whether this intrinsick Goodness be present or absent. For an Effect can receive no Alteration from that which has no relation to it under the Notion of a Cause. Upon this Principle therefore it must follow that all Methods of Religion are alike with respect to Salvation or the Favour of God; that in the same respect all Communions, how unequal soever they may be as to their intrinsick Worth and Excellency, are upon an equal Foot; and that therefore if a Man chuses the worst Communion possible, the Sincerity of his Choice will justify him in so doing, even so far as that he shall have a Right to as great a Share of God's Favour as if he had chosen the best. Upon the same Principle it also follows, that with respect to the Favour of God all Church Communion is unnecessary. For how is it possible that Church Communion should be at all necessary, if Sincerity alone be sufficient?

THERE is not I believe a *Demonstration in Euclid* that concludes more strongly than this Argument; We will see however, how his Lordship guards against these Consequences. And

I. WHEREAS the Committee have observed that his Lordship has made *all Methods of Religion alike, &c.* and put all Communions upon an equal Foot, &c. his Lordship answers, that (*γ*) *what he says about private Persuasion relates to the Justification of the Man before God, and not to the Excellency of one Communion above another, which it leaves just as it finds it, and cannot possibly alter.* Now by this it is very plain that his Lordship supposes the Charge of the Committee to be, that he has made all Methods of Religion alike, and put all Communions upon an equal Foot, with respect to their

real, natural, and intrinsick Excellency; which is a manifest misrepresentation of the Case. For that which the Committee say is, that his Lordship hath put all Communions upon an equal Foot, WITHOUT REGARD to any intrinsick Goodness, or whether they be right or wrong. That which his Lordship represents the Committee as saying is, that he hath put all Communions upon an equal Foot WITH RESPECT to their intrinsick Goodness. But are these two Assertions the same? It is plain that they are not. For whereas the latter supposes that his Lordship hath destroyed all real intrinsick Difference between one Communion and another, the former supposes no such Matter, but only this, that his Lordship in his Argument hath had no regard to any such Difference, or hath not considered whether a Communion be either right or wrong. Yes, but the Committee you'll say still charge his Lordship with putting all Communions upon an equal Foot. Upon an equal Foot? In what respect? In some other respect you may be sure; for what Sense is there in saying that all Communions are put upon an equal Foot, *i. e.* made equal with respect to their intrinsick Goodness, without regarding their intrinsick Goodness, or whether they be right or wrong? He that puts all Communions upon an equal Foot in this Sense, is always supposed to have regarded or considered the intrinsick Goodness of all, and to have compared them one with another; and therefore had the Committee intended any such Charge against his Lordship, they would have expressed themselves barely after this manner, that he had put all Communions upon an equal Foot with respect to their intrinsick Goodness, and would not have added those Words, *without regarding whether they be right or wrong*, which indeed is a very shameful Inconsistency. And what now is that other Respect in which the Committee charge his Lordship with having put all Communions upon an equal Foot? Why, they tell you as plainly as Words can express it, that it is with respect to the Efficaciousness of them, in order to the intitling Men to God's Favour. All Methods of Religion, say they, are made alike, not simply, but with respect to Salvation or the Favour of God. So that the Meaning of the Committee in these Passages appears evidently to be this: That notwithstanding there is a manifest Difference between one Communion and another, and one Method of Religion and another, with respect to their intrinsick Goodness; and notwithstanding it ought in reason to be supposed that the intrinsick Goodness of the Communion, or Method a Man follows, has at least some Share in intitling him to God's Favour, yet that his Lordship, as he hath stated the Matter, has made it to signify nothing at all to this End, and therefore has in this respect put all Methods and all Communions upon an equal Foot. This, I say, is the Meaning of the Committee in these Passages, and common Equity requires that all other Passages relating to this Point in the *Representation* be interpreted after the same manner, if the Words themselves be fairly capable (as undoubtedly they are) of being brought to this Sense. Thus when the Committee charge it upon his Lordship, that according to his Doctrine *no one Method of Religion is IN IT SELF preferable to another*, the Meaning of this Passage is not, as his Lordship supposes, that there is no real Excellency or Goodness in one Method above another, but that no one Method of Religion is of it self, or upon the Account of any intrinsick Goodness that it has above another, preferable to another; I say preferable to another, *i. e.* with respect to any Vertue or Efficacy which the intrinsick Goodness of it will give it above another, towards procuring Salvation or the Favour of God. So likewise when they charge it upon his Lordship, that *in Vertue of his Principle he hath left no Difference between the Popish and our Reformed Church, but what is founded in Personal Persuasion only, and not in the Truth of the Doctrines, or in the Excellency of one Communion above the other*; the Sense of this is not what his Lordship has made it to be, that the Communion of the Reformed Church is not (according to his Lordship's Principle) really better than the Communion of the Popish, but that the Communion of the Reformed Church is in it self of no greater Efficacy towards the intitling Men to Salvation than the Communion

nion of the Popish, and consequently that his Lordship in Vertue of his Principle, hath in this Respect left no Difference between the one and the other, but what is founded in Personal Persuasion.

UPON the whole therefore, it is manifest, that the Sense of the *Committee* is exactly as I have stated it above, *viz.* That his Lordship in consequence of his Doctrine hath made all Methods of Religion alike, and put all Communions upon an equal Foot with respect to any Vertue or Efficacy that is in them towards intitling Men to God's Favour. Which had his Lordship duly attended to, he might, perhaps, have spared himself and his Readers a great deal of fruitless Trouble, there being no less than one intire Section, and part of a Second, which run upon this general Mistake, that the *Committee* had charged him with making all Methods of Religion alike, and putting all Communions upon an equal Foot with respect to their intrinsick Goodness, and which consequently do not in the least contribute towards removing the Difficulty which is now fastened upon his Doctrine. But

2. WITH respect to the next of the Passages above cited, his Lordship's Management is yet more extraordinary. That Passage lays it upon his Lordship, that in following any particular Communion he has *referred every Man to his own private Judgment, as that which will justify even the worst Choice he can make.* Here his Lordship peremptorily denies that he has ever taught any such thing, and is (2) *forced to complain* of the *Committee* as having *framed this Opinion* for him. The Reader will soon be convinced how small a Matter will force a Complaint from his Lordship: For even as he himself has been pleased to represent the Matter, the Ground of this Complaint is no more than this, *viz.* That the *Committee* have framed this Opinion for him IN WORDS *which he neither ever did use, nor will ever own.* Well; be it so; I hope there is no great Harm in this, provided his Lordship will but own THE THING. And that he does own the thing is plain: For how does he go about to clear himself? Why, by alledging, that his *constant Doctrine* is not that a *Man's private Judgment will justify him* in the *WORST Choice that he can make*, but that it will justify him in the *BEST Choice that he can make!* This you'll say perhaps is a very manifest Contradiction: but pray consider whether that which the *Committee* call the *worst Choice*, and that which his Lordship calls the *best Choice*, may not possibly be the same; and if you will not be so easy as to be carried away merely with the Sound of Words, you will find this to be the very Case. For what do the *Committee* mean by the *WORST Choice*? Why, plainly the Choice of that Communion which is IN IT SELF the worst. And what does his Lordship mean by the *BEST Choice*? Manifestly the Choice of that Communion which upon the strictest Inquiry APPEARS TO BE the best. But may not that Communion which appears to a Man to be THE BEST, be in it self THE WORST? His Lordship will not deny it. Suppose then that a Man should chuse the worst Communion thinking it to be the best, will the Sincerity of his private Judgment justify him in this Case? His Lordship owns and contends that it will. Who sees not then that this is only a Contradiction of Words, and that his Lordship owns the very thing charged upon him by the *Committee*? I am sorry his Lordship should descend to such mean *Sophistry* as this! His Lordship here supposes that by the worst Choice the *Committee* meant the Choice of that which appears to a Man's own Judgment to be the worst! But what Sense can there be in this Supposition? Or who but his Lordship speaks after this manner? Every one knows that in common Computation the Goodness or Badness of a Man's Choice is not measured by his private Persuasion, but by the real intrinsick Value of the thing he chuses. And I believe, that should any one in the pure sim-

(2) Ibid. Sect. 19. p. 92, 93.

plicity of his Heart chuse Silver instead of Gold as the more valuable Metal, his Lordship would hardly be brought to affirm that he had made the better Choice.

3. It is farther charged upon his Lordship by the *Committee*, that he hath rendered all Church-Communion unnecessary in order to intitle Men to the Favour of God. Now this likewise his Lordship declares that he has not taught, and says that it is an Opinion framed for him by the *Committee*. But what has his Lordship done to shew that this is not his Opinion; or that this Consequence does not necessarily follow from his Principles? Why nothing except it be this, that he has pretended as if this Part of the Charge were contradictory to the former. Now the two Parts put together stand thus, and are thus set down in the Representation. *All Church-Communion is render'd unnecessary in order to intitle Men to the Favour of God, and every Man is referred in these Cases (i. e. in the Case of chusing a Communion) to his private Judgment, as that which will justify the worst Choice he can make.* (a) The Words, says his Lordship, in which this Charge is drawn up, are very extraordinary. (For) First, It is declared that in my Book all Church-Communion is rendered unnecessary in order to intitle Men to God's Favour; and then it is immediately supposed that the same Book makes Communion with some Church or other necessary, but only leaves every Man in these Cases (I suppose they mean in this Case) to his private Judgment. I think this Observation is very extraordinary! For where or how is it supposed that his Lordship hath made Communion with some Church or other necessary? Why, his Lordship it seems hath declared, that when a Man does chuse a Communion, the Sincerity of his Private Judgment will justify him if he chuses the worst! Very true! But may not the same Person also very consistently affirm, that the same Sincerity will likewise justify him if he chuses none at all! Again; If a Man makes all Church-Communion unnecessary; may he not, or rather will he not by his Principles naturally be led to say, that if he does think fit to follow any Communion, it signifies nothing which he follows? But his Lordship I perceive was in great Streights; and what should he do but have recourse to Art where Reason would not bear him out? His Lordship's general Maxim is, that Sincerity alone justifies a Man. What then can be more plain than, that if a Man be but sincere, whether he joins himself to any Communion, or to no Communion, he is equally justified?

THUS then you see what the Consequence of his Lordship's Doctrine is, viz. That a Man who joins himself with no Society of Christians, who frequents no Place of Publick Worship, who partakes of no Sacraments, may yet have a Title to God's Favour, and that in the same Degree with him who sincerely keeps the whole Law. His Lordship has indeed said one thing, which were it true would destroy the Force of this Objection: But besides, that it would also make his whole Doctrine about Sincerity to be utterly insignificant, the Supposition is attended with this further Unhappiness, that it is actually false. The Supposition is in short this: That those who (b) sincerely believe in Christ, will be led by their Regard to him to the Profession of that FAITH, and to the outward Use of ALL THE MEANS which he appointed. Which is as much as to say, that those who sincerely believe in Christ will be led by their Regard to him to BELIEVE and Do as the Gospel directs them. This will be farther plain from another Passage, where he declares, that (c) it CANNOT BE SUPPOSED—that a Man who sincerely is subject to Jesus Christ alone in the great Affair of Salvation, will not follow Jesus Christ's Direction, and join in the Worship of God with other Men, or will not be induced to follow ALL his Master's INJUNCTIONS. Indeed, my Lord! Why then, for whose Use I pray was this new Scheme of Justification

(a) Ibid.

(b) Ibid. Sect. 15. p. 81.

(c) Ibid. Sect. 14. p. 79.

contrived? I always apprehended that it was for the Benefit of such Persons as should in the Sincerity of their Hearts be led to act contrary to Christ's Injunctions. But now it seems there neither are nor can be any such Persons; for all sincere Persons we are told will and must be led to follow Christ's Injunctions, and that not only a few, but all of them. But where if I may presume to ask, did his Lordship learn this? Does Experience teach it? I would to God it did. But Experience is full against him; and since his Lordship has not in another Case thought it beneath him to appeal to the *Quakers*, let me have leave also to appeal to them in this. This People it is true are joined together in a Communion, and frequent Places of Publick Worship among themselves; so far therefore they must be excepted out of the present Argument. But then his Lordship knows that they are not led by their Regard to Christ, to the Profession of that Faith which he has appointed; for they err in several very important Matters of Faith. His Lordship is also sensible that they are not led by their Regard to Christ, to the outward Use of all the Means which he has appointed, or to follow all his Injunctions; for they reject both the Sacraments. I ask then, are this People any of them sincere, or are they not? If they be any of them sincere, his Lordship's Assertion, that all sincere Persons will be led to follow all the Appointments or Injunctions of Christ, must be false. If they are not any of them sincere, his Lordship damns them all, and the *Quakers* will have Reason to thank him for his Charity. Why should I mention the *Papists*, who according to his Lordship's Rule must also be all of them insincere, and consequently in a State of Damnation? But his Lordship cannot but be farther apprized, that there are even among Christians a Sort of Men who neglect wholly to join in any Publick Worship, and to partake in any Ordinances of the Gospel. These Men will tell us that in their Opinion they may serve God as acceptably by saying their Prayers and reading their Bibles at Home, as they can by going to Church, or to any other Assembly of Christians. And are then all such Persons insincere? For my own Part I dare not affirm it, and if his Lordship should, it will be more than he will be ever able to prove, unless he could determine precisely how far Men may or may not be led aside by the Error of their Understandings, which is a thing utterly impossible.

In short; That Sincerity alone should be sufficient to lead Men to observe ALL the Appointments or Injunctions of Christ, is a thing so contrary both to Reason and plain Matter of Fact, and so inconsistent with his own Scheme, that it may justly be wonder'd what should lead his Lordship to say it. That he was then upon another Point, and little thought of his general Principle, you will easily guess; and though it signifies not much as to the present Controversy to be informed what that Point was, I will yet beg leave just to mention it. His Lordship had in his Sermon defined the Church to be, *The Number of Men whether small or great, whether dispersed or united, who truly and sincerely are Subjects to Jesus Christ alone, in Matters relating to the Favour of God and their Eternal Salvation.* The Fault which the Committee found with this Definition, was that his Lordship had left out of it several particulars which are necessary to form a just and true Notion of THE CHURCH, instancing in *preaching the Word, and administering the Sacraments.* In Answer to this, his Lordship says that he was not then speaking of A VISIBLE Church (to which alone, as such, visible outward Signs belong) but of the Universal INVISIBLE Church made up of such as sincerely believe in Christ. Let this be admitted; still it will be true in his Lordship's Account that a Man may be a Member of Christ's invisible Church, though he be not a Member of the visible one. For if every one who is sincerely subject to Christ alone is a Member of the invisible Church, the Consequence is clear that he is still a Member of that Church, though in the Sincerity of his Heart he should be led to cut himself off from the visible one, even by neglecting the Sacraments and every thing else, in the joint Practice and Participation whereof visible

Communion does consist. So that his Lordship found himself still liable to that which the *Committee* had objected against him, to wit, the having thrown out (by his Definition) the Participation of the *Sacraments, &c.* as not essential to the denominating a Man a true Member of Christ's Church. What now was to be done in this Case? Why there were but two Things possible. The first was for his Lordship to have retracted his Definition, and once in his Life time to have confessed himself in the Wrong. The other was to say that a Man could not be a sincere Subject of Jesus Christ and yet neglect the *Sacraments, &c.* This latter his Lordship thought fit to chuse; (d) *To make, says he, such Objections as these, is to make Objections that have no Weight in them, unless they who make them suppose that by taking Christ for their Lawgiver and King, Men will not be led by him, and his own Directions to the two Sacraments, and to the Use of his own Appointments; a Supposition which I shall take care never to be guilty of.* I know of no Crime that there is in making such a Supposition as this; or if there be any, it certainly lies at his Lordship's Door; for his whole Scheme of Justification depends upon this Supposition. But this, I think, is a Crime, (and I am sorry his Lordship should not think it so too) to take so unwarrantable a Step to get over an Objection, which he must needs have been sensible is impossible to be removed.

To return; It appears from what has been said, that his Lordship in consequence of his general Principle must affirm, that provided a Man sincerely believes in Jesus Christ, it signifies nothing as to his Title to God's Favour, whether he be of this Communion of Christians, or of that Communion, or of any Communion at all; and consequently that in this Respect he hath not only put all Communions upon an equal Foot, but render'd all Communion unnecessary. Give me leave now to add one Consequence to those already drawn by the *Committee*; I say then

4. THAT upon his Lordship's Principle, even the Religion of Jesus Christ, in the largest Sense of the Word, or as it takes in all those that believe in Jesus Christ, is of no greater Efficacy towards procuring God's Favour than the Religion of *Mahomet*. To make this plain, I will apply that Argument which his Lordship calls a Demonstration, and leave you to judge whether it be not as conclusive with respect to Christians and Mahometans, as it is with respect to Protestants and Papists. "What is it then which justifies the Christians in refusing to follow the Religion of the Mahometans? Is it that the Religion of the Mahometans is a corrupt and false Religion, or that the Christians are persuaded in their own Consciences that it is so? The latter without doubt, as appears from this Demonstration: Take away from them this Persuasion; they are so far from being justified, that they are condemned for their refusing. Give them this Persuasion again, they are condemned if they do not refuse" &c. Now 'tis manifest that this Argument may be put as strong on the Side of the Mahometans, as it is on the side of the Christians. For that which justifies us against them, must also justify them against us. I ask then; Can there be, or is there any such thing as a SINCERE Mahometan, or (for it is all one as to the Argument) a SINCERE Jew or Heathen? If not, then his Lordship hath left all the World, except Christians, irretrievably in a State of Condemnation; a Supposition, which (to use his Lordship's own Words) I shall take care never to be guilty of. But if otherwise, then by his Lordship's Argument so many of all Sorts as are sincere are justified, *i. e.* (for this is what his Lordship means) they are upon the same Foot with us with respect to any Right or Title which either of us have to Salvation or the Favour of God. The thing indeed speaks it self: For

(d) Ibid. Sect. 15. p. 81.

if Sincerity alone be that which gives Men a Title to God's Favour, as his Lordship asserts, then all sincere Persons, Jews, Heathens, Turks, Christians, or whatever else you can conceive them to be, are in this Respect all alike, *i. e.* no one of them hath a greater Title to God's Favour than another.

THUS then you see that in his Lordship's Account, the Method of Religion which a Man follows considered as a Method of Religion, is entirely shut out from having any thing to do in intitling him to the Favour of God. It might have been said

5. THAT in vertue of his general Principle he hath left no room for God Almighty in dispensing his Favours, to make any Difference between one Man and another upon the Account of their Moral Qualifications. His Lordship, I presume, will not affirm, that all Persons who are sincere in their Persuasions, and act according to what they are thus sincerely persuaded of, do yet make equal Improvements under those Persuasions. If therefore the Favour of God follows Sincerity as such, *i. e.* If God in dispensing his Favours has no Regard to any thing else but Sincerity; it will follow that how different soever the State and Condition of one sincere Man may be from the State of another as to such Improvements, his State as to the Favour of God must be the very same. But I am willing to use his Lordship with all the fairness imaginable, and therefore will not suppose that he intended any such thing, because I hope he does not believe any such thing, and because it was no way suitable to the Matter he was upon, to have affirmed any such thing. The Case of a Man's chusing in the Sincerity of his Heart a wrong Method of Religion, was the Case in Hand; and it is to the Method of Religion *only* that he opposes the Sincerity of private Judgment.

HERE then I leave the Matter to rest; and from the whole shall lay down this Proposition as fully and adequately expressive of his Lordship's meaning, *viz.* That "provided Men be but sincere in their Persuasions, the Method of Religion which they follow will, in itself or as such, make no difference as to their Right or Title to the Divine Favour, or the Rewards of a Life to come." Thus the Kingdom of Heaven, which the Gospel promises to true Christians, is set open to Men of all Religions, and of all Sects and Persuasions in Religion; which Principle that it destroys all necessity of *Church-Communion*, as a means to intitle us to Salvation, is a Thing too plain to need any farther Proof.

CHAP. II.

Containing an Answer to his Lordship's Objections against the foregoing State of the Case.

THUS stands the Point between his Lordship and the Committee, according as it was stated by me in my *Remarks* upon his Lordship's *Position*; against which Account (plain as it is) divers Objections have been made by his Lordship and his Friends. As to the latter, it will be to little purpose at this time to trouble the Reader with a Rehearsal of what they have offered in defence of this Passage; For this we may be certain of aforehand, that if his Lordship understands his own meaning, so far as they differ from him in their Interpretations, so far they are wrong. But his Lordship has a Right to be taken notice of, and to him therefore I shall reply.

THE first complaint we meet with is in his Answer to the Dean of Chichester's Vindication of the *Corporation and Test Acts*, p. 117. where his Lordship speaking of my Remarks says, that therein I have bestowed a great deal of Severity and Sarcasm upon an incidental Sentence of his, the grammatical Sense of which I have greatly mistaken, and from the real meaning of which I could not suffer my self to differ one hair's breadth. Whether this Passage be incidental or not incidental I shall leave the Reader to judge. But this is nothing at all to the Purpose. The Point and the only Point is whether I have mistaken the grammatical Sense of it; and this I am willing to try. Now in order to this we must find out the Particulars upon which this general Charge of misunderstanding is founded; and these we meet with in his Answer to the Dean of Worcester's Sermon, where his Lordship has more largely enter'd upon a Defence of this Passage. I shall not pursue him step by step, (which is not needful) but digest out of the whole the main Points upon which the Controversy seems to turn; which that the Reader may the more clearly apprehend, I shall set down my own Charge and his Lordship's Answer directly one against another.

My Charge then stands thus:

THAT according to his Lordship's Proposition, All sincere Persons, Jews and Heathens, as well as Christians are intitled to an equal Degree or Measure of God's Favour or Rewards of a Life to come; notwithstanding any thing which may be pleaded from the mere difference of the Religions they severally follow.

His Lordship's Answer is

FIRST, That his Words have no Relation to the Difference of Rewards in Heaven.

SECONDLY, That the Proposition does not extend to Heathens and Unbelievers, but relates expressly to the Choice of a Church-Communion among Persons already supposed to be Christians.

If these two Points can be made good it shall be acknowledged that I have indeed greatly mistaken the plain grammatical meaning of his Lordship's Proposition. But let us see how his Lordship supports them.

I BEGIN with the first of these two Objections, viz. That his Lordship's Words have no relation to the Difference of Rewards. His Words are well known to be these, The Favour of God follows Sincerity considered as such, and consequently equally follows every equal Degree of Sincerity; and the Point will lye principally in this, viz. What his Lordship may most rationally be supposed to have meant by the Favour of God. I always took him to mean the Approbation of God in Conjunction with those Benefits, Blessings, or (for it is all one) Rewards, which he bestows in consequence of that Approbation; and this certainly is the most natural and obvious Sense of the Phrase. For when we talk of the Favour of a Prince or a Great Man, what do we mean? Do we speak of a simple Approbation or good Liking of the Person whom he is said to favour, and not rather of an Approbation shewing itself forth by suitable Acts of Kindness and Beneficence? But his Lordship is now pleased to distinguish between the Favour of God, and the Rewards distributed by that Favour; (e) and upon this Distinction, alledges that (f) all who are equally in the Favour of God, are not therefore intitled to the same Degree of Reward.

THAT there is a Distinction between the Favour or Approbation of God, and the

(e) P. 166.

(f) P. 167.

Rewards distributed by that Favour, in strictness of Speech, I allow. And his Lordship will hereafter find me so happy as to concur with him in the Application of the *Parable* of the *Pounds* or *Talents*, which I have produced (as he has) to shew that Men may equally be approved of God, and yet not equally rewarded. But that I conceive which it concerns us to inquire after, is not whether this Distinction be just and right itself, but whether his Lordship, in the Proposition now controverted, had any Regard to this Distinction. If it be plain that he had, I submit to his Lordship's Correction, and beg his Pardon. But if it be plain that he had not, the Sense of his Proposition can receive no manner of Alteration from this new Distinction. Now 1. His Lordship has no where before so much as once mentioned this Distinction, nor given the least Hint from whence it was possible even to conjecture that he used the Word *Favour* simply for the Approbation of God, or for the Approbation of God considered as distinct from the Rewards which he bestows in Consequence of that Approbation. 2. He has given us the most evident Proof that can be, that he intended no such Distinction, but that he used the Word *Favour* in its most common and obvious Acceptation, to wit, as including under it both the Idea of Approbation, and the Idea of Reward. For he that speaks of *Salvation*, *Eternal Life*, *Eternal Happiness*, and the like, certainly does not speak simply or abstractedly of the Divine Approbation, but of some Reward. Now his Lordship has constantly used these Terms as equivalent to that Favour of God, which he says Men are equally intitled to in Proportion to their Sincerity. This will appear very plain from the following Passages.

WHEN they would allarm you——by telling you that you cannot hope for THE FAVOUR OF GOD but in the strictest Communion with their Church——that God hath himself hung your SALVATION upon this Nicety —— The following Arguments will justify you——God is just, and equal, and good; and as sure as he is so, he cannot put the SALVATION and HAPPINESS of any Man upon what he himself hath put it out of the Power, &c.——It is highly absurd to put so important a Point as GOD'S FAVOUR, and ETERNAL HAPPINESS, upon what no Man living, &c. —— Therefore your INTEREST in the FAVOUR of God can have nothing to do with it —— As sure as God is just he would have laid this Matter open and plain to the Capacities of those whose SALVATION was to depend upon it —— Therefore this cannot be the Point upon which your SALVATION can at all depend, Preservative, p. 77, 78, 79. Again; You cannot put either their or your own SALVATION upon their regular Ordination——Nor the ETERNAL HAPPINESS of Mankind upon their agreeing, &c. —— Here I cannot forbear to mention an Argument, which I think amounts to a Demonstration —— You say that GOD'S FAVOUR is not dispensed but in the strict Communion, &c.—— The FAVOUR OF GOD follows Sincerity considered as such, and consequently equally follows every equal Degree of Sincerity. If any Persons rather than agree to be HAPPY in the Company of others, chuse to hazard their own SALVATION upon their own infallible Certainty——I do not envy them, &c. Ibid. p. 88, 89, 90, 91.

SEE how frequently throughout this Dispute, his Lordship has exchanged the *Favour* of God for *Salvation*, *Eternal Salvation*, *Happiness*, and *Eternal Happiness*, as equivalent Terms! The same Observation may be made upon his Answer to the Representation; but instead of producing those Passages (which are every where to be met with where he is treating upon the Subject) it will be more proper towards clearing this Point, to consider the general Method of his Lordship's Defence against the Committee upon this part of their Charge. That they understood his Lordship as I understood him is plain; for they have charg'd him (from the very Passage now in Debate among others) with having put all *Communities* upon an EQUAL FOOT, and having made all *Methods of Religion* ALIKE with respect to SALVATION or the FAVOUR OF GOD. And how has his Lordship answered this? Why, (as I have shewn you in the last Chapter) by run-

ning clearly off from the Point, and arguing against the *Committee* upon a wrong State of the Case. What? Was not his Lordship's Distinction as good then as it is now? Or did he chuse this unjustifiable Management, when (if you will believe him) he had a proper Answer ready before him? How easy, how natural, yea, how necessary would it have been for his Lordship to have told the *Committee* "that his Principle left room for a very wide Difference between one
 " Communion and another, one Method of Religion and another. That his
 " Words were, the *Favour of God* equally follows, not *the Rewards distributed by*
 " that Favour equally follow, every equal Degree of Sincerity. That there-
 " fore how truly soever it might be alledged, that he had put all Methods of
 " Religion upon the same Foot with respect to the Favour of God, yet it
 " could not be said that he had put them upon the same Foot with respect to
 " Salvation." This is plainly the Substance of his Lordship's present Defence. But why (I ask) his present Defence only? Why was not this insisted upon before? Why the Reason is as plain, *viz.* Because it was not thought of before. The Distinction upon which it is founded having manifestly no place in the original Plan, did not so quickly occur, but is now thrust in after all the Variety of Projects imaginable have unsuccessfully been tryed, to uphold the sinking Fabrick. Necessity is indeed the fruitful Mother of Invention! but this is nothing to me. The Point is not what his Lordship says *now*, but what he said *some time ago*. It was THEN asserted that the Favour of God equally follows every equal Degree of Sincerity. THEN the Favour of God was the same with Salvation, or the Happiness of a Life to come; and consequently, it was THEN asserted that Salvation, or the Happiness of a Life to come, equally follows every equal Degree of Sincerity.

THE next thing to be consider'd is, what is meant by *equally following every equal Degree*. His Lordship is pleased to lay it down as a thing (g) *evident*, that
 " to say *the Favour of God equally follows every equal Degree of Sincerity*, is no
 " more than to say, that *every truly sincere Christian may be equally certain of not be-*
 " *ing OUT of God's Favour*, or (which is the Consequence of that) of being IN
 " it." And to shew you that this was not unadvisedly spoken, it is repeated in the *Postscript* in answer to the Bishop of Oxford. (h) *If he (the Bishop) had a*
mind to change my Words (i.e. for this is what his Lordship means, without alter-
ing my SENSE) he might have expressed it thus, That all truly or equally sincere Per-
sons, may be equally sure of being in God's Favour. Now if this be so evident as his Lordship pretends, it must by the same Rule of Construction be also as evident, that to say that *Salvation, or the Happiness of a Life to come, equally follows every*
equal Degree of Sincerity, is no more than to say, that *every sincere Person, or Christian*
at least, may be equally certain of Salvation, or a State of Happiness in a Life to
come; and consequently, his Lordship's Position will still have no relation to the difference of Rewards. But surely either there is no such thing as Difference in Nature, or there is a Difference here, and that so visible, that 'tis impossible not to attend to it! *The Favour of God equally follows every equal Degree of Sin-*
cerity; this manifestly affirms an Equality in the Degrees of Favour, where the Degrees of Sincerity are equal. *Every sincere Person may be equally certain of being*
in God's Favour; this as manifestly affirms no Equality in the Degrees of Favour, but an Equality of Certainty of Favour in general. If his Lordship cannot see this, I have no Help for him. (i) But those who can see it, will also see how the Point now stands between us. His Lordship's Proposition sets forth that the Degrees of God's Favour will always be proportionable to the Degrees of Sincerity. By the *Favour of God* (as I have shewn) WAS meant *Salvation*, or the Happiness of a Life to come; by consequence the Sense of his Lordship's Position is as

(g) P. 168.

(h) P. 218.

(i) *In circulo aequales rectae lineae aequaliter distant a Centro.* EUCLID. He that understands this cannot but see the true Sense of his Lordship's Proposition.

I understood it to be, *viz.* That the Degrees of Salvation, or Happiness in a Life to come, will always be proportionable to the Degrees of Sincerity.

To convince the Reader yet farther, that I have done his Lordship no wrong, I desire he would consider the Difference that there is between the Sense of this Passage, as explained by Mr. *Pyle* and *Silvius*, and that which his Lordship would now willingly put upon it. His Lordship, you see, maintains that this Passage has no relation to the Difference of Rewards; but both Mr. *Pyle* and *Silvius* have supposed, that it has a relation to the Difference of Rewards, and have constantly argued against me upon this very Supposition. *Silvius*, 'tis true, has in his last Book upon the Subject (written against the *Dean of Chichester*) mentioned the Distinction which his Lordship now insists upon. But he confesses at the same time (as indeed there was a Necessity for him to confess) that it was an *After-thought*. Again; ask these Gentlemen what is meant by the Favour of God *equally following every equal Degree* of Sincerity; and they will both tell you that it signifies, that the Degrees of Favour will always be proportionable to the Degrees of Sincerity, only with this Proviso; which they think (though very absurdly) ought to be understood, *viz.* That *cetera sint paria*, that there be an Equality in other Respects. His Lordship pleads for no such Reserve as this, but in Defiance to the Authority of Language, asserts, that to say that the Favour of God equally follows every equal Degree of Sincerity, does not imply that the Degrees of Favour will always be proportionable to the Degrees of Sincerity, but only that the Certainty of Favour in general, will always be proportionable to the Degrees of Sincerity! Is not this now a Demonstration to the Eye-sight of the whole World, that the Sense which I have put upon the Bishop's Words is the most obvious and natural one? I may trust any Man of common Understanding with this Question. For can that be the most obvious and natural Sense of a Passage, which no Body can see but his Lordship! Can it be imagined, that if his Lordship's new invented Sense were the most obvious and natural one, and I had so shamefully broken in upon the Rules of Grammatical Construction as I am represented to have done, that two such zealous Advocates for his Lordship should overlook that Sense, and so intirely agree with me in mine! Surely his Lordship is not the only Person in the World that understands English! He will permit his Friends at least, to understand it; And if his Lordship could say that I (*k*) *wanted not WILL to find out the WORST Meaning he could with any sort of Right be charged with*; I may say, I hope without any Breach of Justice or Charity, that they wanted not a Will to find out the best. But why do I speak of his Lordship's Friends, when his Lordship himself does so sensibly feel the Weight of his own Burden? So exact is the Resemblance between the plain Sense of his Proposition, and my Interpretation of it, that lest it should too strongly force it self upon the Eyes of every Reader, his Lordship has been at some Pains to set them as far asunder as possible, even when he has pretended, and therefore ought to have put them together. Not once has he had the Courage to do me the Justice of a fair Comparison! For see how he begins! (*l*) "The Favour of God follows Sincerity considered as such, and consequently equally follows every equal Degree of Sincerity. *This* (says his Lordship) *has been interpreted as if I had taught, that all equally sincere Persons would have the same Place, or the same Reward in Heaven.*" And referring to my Book, he says it is *written upon this Mistake*. Well; how does this appear to be a Mistake? Why thus; "As if THE FAVOUR OF GOD were an equivalent Expression to THE HIGHEST REWARDS distributed by that Favour; as if the LOWEST Reward in Heaven were not EQUALLY A PROOF that the Persons instated in THEM" (it should be IT) "were in the Favour of God, with the HIGHEST." Here is in this

Passage a very evident Misrepresentation both of his own Words, and my Interpretation of them. *As if the Favour of God was an equivalent Expression to the highest Rewards!* This implies that my Interpretation makes the Favour of God to be an equivalent Expression to the highest Rewards. And it was none of his Lordship's hasty Thoughts; for we have it again, p. 168. *To argue against it (i. e. his Proposition) as if the FAVOUR OF GOD could signify nothing but THE HIGHEST AND GREATEST REWARDS in Heaven, shews a Resolution of Rigour against the Grammatical Meaning of a Sentence;* and again in the Postscript, p. 218. *Let him (the Bishop of Oxford) shew by any Rule of Language among Divines, that to be IN THE FAVOUR OF GOD signifies to be intitled to the HIGHEST REWARDS in Heaven.* I wonder in my Conscience what Grammar it is his Lordship makes use of! For in the common way of Construction nothing can be more plain, than that my Interpretation makes the Favour of God to be equivalent, neither to the highest nor the lowest Reward, but to Reward indiscriminatively or in general; and therefore all that his Lordship can justly charge me with, even in the way of Consequence, is only that I have made the highest Degree of God's Favour equivalent to the highest Reward. Again; *As if the LOWEST Reward were not EQUALLY a Proof that the Persons instated in it, were in the FAVOUR OF GOD with the HIGHEST.* Thus his Lordship is pleased to represent his own Words! But I must desire the Reader to place the Word *equally* where it stands in his Proposition, and to read thus; *As if the LOWEST Reward were not a Proof that the Persons instated in it, were EQUALLY IN THE FAVOUR OF GOD with those who are instated in the HIGHEST.* This you'll say is but a small Change in the Words, but you must needs observe that it makes a very great Difference in the Sense, and without doubt his Lordship observed it too; for 'tis not his manner to depart from himself without a Reason. How far his Lordship may fancy himself exempted by the Superiority of his Character from some common Rules, I cannot tell. But I have it to say with great Satisfaction of Mind, that I know (and the World knows as well as I) that I never yet dared to use his Lordship, or any of my Opposers, in such an unfair manner as this.

I SHALL conclude this Head with two Observations, the Design of which is to shew, that supposing I had thus far been mistaken in the Sense of his Lordship's Proposition, the Difference between us will still remain the same. And,

1. His Lordship may be pleased to remember, that I have long ago, even from the beginning, abated so much of my Rigour (I will not say AGAINST but) FOR the Grammatical Meaning of Words, as not to interpret his Proposition as designed to extend to those Improvements which Men make under the Methods of Religion, which they have sincerely embraced. To satisfy himself of this the Reader needs only to turn back to the close of the foregoing Chapter, where he will find the Question to be left upon this single Point, *viz.* Whether one Method of Religion AS SUCH, or considered only as a Method of Religion, intitles a Man to as great Degrees of future Happiness or Reward as another? I maintain that it does not, and his Lordship, I think, has, as plainly as can be, maintained that it does. For though he contends for a Difference in the Degrees of Reward, even when there is an Equality in the Degrees of Sincerity, yet he contends for this Difference, not on the account of the Difference that there is, or may be in the Method of Religion, but solely on the Account of the Difference that there is, or may be in the Moral Improvements of Men. I refer not for this to his Proposition; I care not whether there had been any such Proposition in the World. But I appeal to the Bishop now, even to his last declared Sense, even to this very Book, and to that very part of it, which is professedly written to shew that I have misunderstood him. His Lordship in effect tells us, that Persons of different Communions may be differently rewarded, though they be all of them equally sincere, and equally in the Favour of God. Why so? Is it because the best Communion considered

as the best Communion, gives a Title to a better Reward than the worst? Why no; but it is because *the BEST Church Communion* — *may be an Opportunity or Capacity of GREATER IMPROVEMENTS.* This is entirely to shut out the Method of Religion AS SUCH, from being the Ground of any Difference in the Reward of sincere Christians, which will still be more plain if you consider the Connexion that there is between this Passage and what goes before. (m) Thus it will be amongst sincere Christians who have lived in THE SAME BEST Church-Communion here on Earth. They are equally in the Favour of God; but their Stations and Places above may be various and different, according to their Capacities and IMPROVEMENTS ON OTHER ACCOUNTS. Now after this it immediately follows, AND THUS again, *the BEST Church-Communion which is truly so, may be an Opportunity or Capacity of GREATER IMPROVEMENTS, and consequently, to say that the Favour of God equally follows sincere Christians of all Communions, is not to say, that the REWARDS distributed at last to these sincere Persons will be all strictly EQUAL.* The Consequence as it here stands is absurd. That which naturally offers it self, and which expresses his Lordship's Meaning, is this, AND CONSEQUENTLY, *though Christians of ALL Communions may be EQUALLY in the FAVOUR of GOD, as being EQUALLY SINCERE, yet it will not follow that the REWARDS distributed at last to these sincere Persons will be all strictly EQUAL.* This I understand; and this without doubt his Lordship would have said, had he not seen that this would have signified nothing towards clearing the Sense of his Proposition, which it was his only Business to justify. Now this sets forth the same Reason, and no other, for the Difference of the Rewards dispensed to Persons of the best and the worst Communion, that it does for the Difference of the Rewards dispensed to Persons of the same best Communion, to wit, their different Moral Improvements under their respective Communions; and consequently, in his Lordship's Account, the Method of Religion AS SUCH, has nothing at all to do in the Matter.

2. My next Observation is, That this Question about the Difference or Equality of Rewards to be bestowed upon Persons equally sincere, is not the principal Point in Debate, but subordinate to another with which I am more directly and immediately concerned. The main and ultimate Point is whether Sincerity, *i. e.* mere Sincerity, gives a Man a Title to the GOSPEL REWARDS, or to the SALVATION of CHRISTIANS. His Lordship's general Proposition (in the Sense wherein I understood it) most certainly implies that it does, and it was for the sake of this Consequence alone that I opposed it. But whether his general Proposition implies it or not, you will grant that the Difference continues to be just the same, if his Lordship has asserted it in other Places. Let all his late Writings now come forth and speak whether he has, or whether he has not! I refer not to particular Passages; there is no Occasion for it. Every one who has the least Acquaintance with his Lordship, must know already how the Case stands. *Salvation* and *Heaven* are Words which he very frequently makes use of, to express that which he says Men are intitled to in vertue of the single Qualification of their being sincere. And what can his Lordship mean by *Heaven*, but that Reward which the Gospel promiseth? Or what *Salvation* can he speak of, when writing to Christians, but the Salvation of Christians? Now till his Lordship will either give up this Point, or shew a good Reason why it ought not to be given up, there can be no Agreement between us. To talk of different Rewards in the Kingdom of Heaven (which is manifestly that, and that only, which his Lordship contends for even in his last Book) will not help him, so long as Sincerity ALONE is made to be (and this very Plea plainly supposes it to be) a sufficient Ground whereupon to found a general Claim or Title to that Kingdom. For what I say is, not that mere Sincerity will not intitle a Man to as great a Degree or Measure of

(m) P. 169.

Christian Salvation, as Sincerity joined with Faith and Obedience; but that Sincerity without Faith and Obedience, will not intitle a Man to any Degree or Measure of Christian Salvation, or that it will not intitle him to Christian Salvation at all.

I HAVE now fully considered the first part of his Lordship's Defence, and proved, I hope, very plainly, that contrary to what his Lordship has alledged, his general Proposition DOES relate to the Difference of Rewards; and that if it did NOT relate to the Difference of Rewards, this will make no Difference as to the true State of the Question between us. I come now to examine his Second Plea, which is, That *the Proposition does not extend to Heathens and Unbelievers, but relates expressly to the Choice of a Church-Communion among Persons already supposed to be Christians.* His Lordship might have said something true and proper upon this Head, but surely this is very far from being so! For a Proposition relates expressly to every thing which is expressed in or by that Proposition, and to nothing else. Now there is in the Proposition no express mention made either of Believers or Unbelievers, and consequently the Proposition expressly relates to neither. But what I say is this, that the Proposition is conceived in such general Terms as to include Unbelievers as well as Believers; and his Lordship, I hope, will not pretend to deny it. For he that speaks of Sincerity as such, speaks of Sincerity wherever it is, and consequently speaks of every sincere Man, whether he be a Christian, or whether he be not a Christian. I do not deny, but that the Circumstances of the Context may sometimes be such, as to enforce a Limitation of the Extent of general Propositions; and it may be alledged that this Proposition of his Lordship's, although conceived in such universal Terms as to include all sincere Men, yet being introduced by a Discourse expressly relating to the Choice of a Church-Communion among Persons already supposed to be Christians, ought in a rational Construction to be extended no farther. This perhaps may be what his Lordship would have said, and it is his only sensible Plea. But it will not do. For

1. THE introducing a general Proposition by a particular Discourse, is not of itself a Circumstance sufficient to enforce a Limitation of that Proposition. For particular Discourses are oftentimes made the Foundation of universal Rules, and this seems plainly to have been the Case with his Lordship. He had been stating the Case of Christians sincerely and honestly serving God by different Methods, or under different Communions, and declaring that they were all of them equally acceptable in the Sight of God, merely in vertue of their Sincerity, which (according to his Lordship) is that alone which justifies both those who are in the best, and those who are in the worst Communion. Now hence he concludes, that *the Favour of God follows Sincerity considered as such, and consequently equally follows every equal Degree of Sincerity.* Who would not understand his Lordship as raising up a general Doctrine from the particular Point in hand, and from what he had laid down as a Rule in one Case, setting forth what must be a Rule in all?

2. WHEN an Author introduces a general Proposition by a particular Discourse, supported by such Reasons as equally hold in all Cases; there is no one of common Sense who would not interpret that general Proposition as intended to reach all Cases. Now his Lordship's Reasons are all of this sort; and I challenge him to shew me so much as one Argument made use of by him, to prove that Sincerity intitles Christians of all Communions to the Favour of God, which will not prove that the same Sincerity intitles Men of all Religions to the Favour of God. His grand Demonstration you have heard already, and it rests upon this general Supposition, that no Man can be intitled to God's Wrath which Way soever he acts. Now whatever force there is in this Argument

gument (which what it is, 'tis not my present Business to inquire) it certainly concludes as strongly for one sincere Man as another, and therefore as strongly for a sincere Unbeliever, as for a sincere Believer. If a sincere Christian cannot be condemned of God which way soever he acts, neither can a sincere Jew, a sincere Mahometan, nor a sincere Heathen; and whatever you infer from this Consideration in reference to the former, you must conclude the same in reference to the latter also. I need not be particular in so plain a matter as this. His Lordship's own State of the Case in the Words immediately going before his Proposition, very evidently shews, that if his Reasoning be just in one Instance, it must be as good in any other. *Your Title to God's Favour, says he, cannot depend SIMPLY upon your adhering to this Communion—but must depend upon it* CONSIDERED AS A CONDUCT HONESTLY ENTERED INTO by the Dictate of your Conscience. If this be true, tell me, if you can, why Heathenism, or Judaism, for instance, IF it be a Conduct honestly entered into by the Dictates of a Man's Conscience, should not give him a Title to the Favour of God, as well as Christianity; or how it is possible that a Christian should have a Title to God's Favour, and a Heathen or Jew have none, when that upon which the Title depends is common to both.

3. It may be added in the last Place, that his Lordship's general Proposition is of such a Sort, as to be utterly incapable of any Limitation. 'Tis a Proposition conceived not only in general Terms, but by such Words as necessarily enforce a general and unlimited Sense. He says, that the Favour of God follows Sincerity *considered as such*, which manifestly excludes the Consideration of every thing but Sincerity, or at least every Method of Religion as such. So that unless you change the Proposition from what it is, to what it is not, you cannot (how much soever the Circumstances of the Place might incline you to the contrary) but interpret it as taking in all sincere Persons without Exception.

UPON the whole then I think, that his Lordship had very little Cause to mention it as the Effect of (n) Warmth, that *some Writers have charged him with maintaining, that Heathens, Jews, and Infidels, if Sincere, are intitled to the Reward of sincere Christians*. I will not pretend to affirm that his Lordship's Intention was to teach that Heathens, Jews, and Infidels, if sincere, are intitled to the Reward of sincere Christians; No, I will believe what his Lordship is pleased to say, *viz. That his Thoughts did not extend beyond Christians when he was writing that Passage*. I will believe it, I say; not because, as he adds, he was writing *in a Christian Country, and to heal the Breaches of Charity among Christians only*. For very wide and Comprehensive Schemes, we know, may be contrived in Christian Countries; and 'tis no new thing for Men, writing for the Sake and on the Account of Christians, to lay down such general Principles as reach even to those who are no Christians. But I will believe this because his Lordship solemnly tells me so: But I must say withal, that if he had not told me so, I should have thought it a very great Affront to him, so much as to have suspected it. For if the Case be thus (and thus it now very plainly appears to be) that his Lordship hath in Fact maintained, what yet he declares it never was in his Thoughts to maintain, it must be said that his Lordship attended very little either to the Force of his own Words, or to the Extent of his own Reasoning, which whether it be a reasonable Apology for himself, or a just Objection against me, I shall willingly leave to his Consideration.

I SHOULD have been very glad, if when his Lordship was upon this Subject, he would have told us plainly what his Opinion is, as to the Case of sincere Heathens, or Unbelievers of any Sort; whether they are, or are not, in vertue

of their Sincerity, intitled to the Reward of sincere Christians. To say that they *were not in his Thoughts when he was writing*, gives us no Light in the Matter. For any one may say this, who is determined on either Side of the Question; and every one naturally would be apt to say it, who believes more than he has a Mind the World should be acquainted with, or more than he is willing to be at the trouble of proving. The Inconveniency that would arise from his Lordship's declaring himself upon this Point is visible. For if he says that sincere Unbelievers ARE intitled to the Reward of sincere Christians, he will then justify me and those other warm Writers, who have charged him with maintaining it, and it will avail him little to have alledged, that they were not in his Thoughts: If he says that they are NOT, he will then bring himself under the hopeless Necessity of endeavouring to justify the Propriety of his former Reasoning, and at the same Time run counter to the most considerable of his Advocates, who having, it seems, read the Bishop's Principles with more Care than his Lordship wrote them, have been hereby led to think, and publicly avow the contrary. It is no small Part of his Lordship's Unhappiness in this Dispute, that in every single Point wherein he differs from me, he differs also from his Friends. This has been sufficiently exemplified in those which have already been debated; and the Case is no less visible in this, except only in reference to *Silvius*, who, as if his Lordship had been at his Elbow, confines indeed (in Words) the Question to sincere Christians, but for the most Part makes use of such Arguments as equally conclude in Favour of sincere Heathens. But for the rest they are all on my Side: For thus Mr. Burnet resolves the Point; (p) BELIEVERS and UNBELIEVERS may possibly not be upon THE SAME BOTTOM with, and as secure of the Favour of God as CHRISTIANS, because they may not be EQUALLY SINCERE: If they ARE, I cannot see but they MUST BE SO. This was granted to Mr. Law, as what appeared to Mr. Burnet to be the direct Consequence of his Lordship's Principles, as will be more fully evident from the following Passage, in which this Concession has the Sanction of his second Thoughts. (q) *The Bishop asserted that the whole of our Title to God's Favour depended upon SINCERITY. Upon this you accuse his Lordship, and you bring it as an Argument against his Doctrine, that he sets sincere JEWS — UPON THE SAME BOTTOM, as to the Favour of God, with sincere CHRISTIANS. The CONSEQUENCE was ALLOWED you, SUPPOSING them all EQUALLY SINCERE.* Mr. Pyle writes in the same Strain; For having observed that I had objected to his Lordship, that his Argument to prove that *Sincerity justifies*, would as well justify Mahometans, Jews, &c. against Christians, as Protestants against Papists; he answers; (r) NO BODY DENIES but it WILL, in the true Sense of — JUSTIFICATION. The true Sense of *Justification*, according to Mr. Pyle, is a Man's being intitled to Rewards Proportionable to his Moral Improvements; which I gather from another Passage, which it may not be improper here to set down, wherein he represents it as the Bishop's Sense, that (s) *The Favour of God uniformly terminates in saving ALL SINCERE PERSONS from Condemnation, and bestowing on them REWARDS PROPORTIONATE to their several QUALIFICATIONS and ADVANCEMENTS in REAL RELIGION.* Pray observe; He says that the Favour of God uniformly terminates in saving all sincere Persons, *i. e.* as he expressly says a few Lines after, all sincere Persons, CHRISTIANS, JEWISH and HEATHENISH. So that according to him (and as he thinks, according to the Bishop also) a sincere Jew or Heathen, is intitled to as good a Reward as a sincere Christian, if the Moral Improvements in both be the same. Mr. Sykes, as I shall now shew you, is of the very same Opinion. Mr. Rogers had objected, that according to the Bishop's Doctrine, *he who rejects Christianity because he believes it to be false, is as acceptable to God, as he who embraces it because he believes it to be true.* Now to this

(p) Answ. to Mr. Law's 1. Letter. p. 8.

(q) Answ. to Mr. Law's 2. Letter. p. 335, 336.

(r) Third Letter. p. 27.

(s) Ib. p. 13.

Mr. Sykes replies (t) 1. (to countenance the Bishop a little) *That the Controversy relates wholly to CHRISTIANS*——But as if he had been conscious of the Weakness and Insufficiency of this Plea, he adds 2. *That suppose a Man so framed by God, as not to be capable of seeing the Connexion of those Proofs, that are urged in behalf of Christianity, i. e. in other Words suppose him sincerely to reject the Gospel*——what then? Why he tells you in plain Terms, *That if in other Respects he be equal to a BELIEVER (i. e. in respect to his Moral Improvements) he is IN AS GOOD A CONDITION as the BELIEVER.*

AFTER such a Cloud of Witnesses as this, I am not in the least solicitous what Opinion his Lordship may have of me, for interpreting his Proposition as including all sincere Persons, and charging him with maintaining that all Heathens, Jews, and Infidels, if sincere, are intitled to the Reward of sincere Christians. You see plainly that they have all of them interpreted it the same way; and in Consequence hereof have maintained, that the Reward of a sincere Heathen differs from the Reward of a sincere Christian upon no other Account, than that upon which only (as they say) the Reward of one Christian differs from the Reward of another Christian, *i. e. on the Account of the Difference that there is in their Moral Improvements.* These Gentlemen have had so many Opportunities of acquainting themselves with the Bishop's Sentiments, that I may be pardoned, I hope, if I suspect, at least, that his Lordship, how loath soever he may be to speak it out, is inwardly of the same Opinion. But whether this be so or not, you see at least how far his general Principles will go; and this is all that the Committee are concerned with.

SECTION III.

Concerning some Points relative to the foregoing Doctrines.

CHAP. I.

Of his Lordship's Description of a CHURCH.

HAVING thus dispatcht the two main Branches of this Controversy; It may be proper to make a few Reflections upon two Particulars which bear a near Relation to the foregoing Doctrines. The first is his Lordship's Description of a Church, which, say the Committee, *doth well agree with these Doctrines.* The Description is this: *That it is the Number of Men, whether small or great, whether dispersed or united, who truly and sincerely are Subjects to Jesus Christ alone, as their Lawgiver and Judge, in Matters relating to the Favour of God and their Eternal Salvation.* His Lordship here rightly observes, that this was intended as a Description (u) not of a Church, *i. e. of a particular Church* (as the Committee seem here to have represented it) but of THE Church, *i. e. of the universal Church.* But this Observation is of no great Weight, because (however it happened that the Committee spoke of a Church in this place) it is plain that every where else in this Observation they speak not of a Church, but of THE Church, and consequently that they understood, and have opposed his Lordship, as describing the universal Church. The great Fault which the

(t) Answ. to Mr. Rogers. p. 45, 46.

(u) Answ. to the Repres. Chap. 1. Sect. 12. p. 70.

Committee found with this Description, you may learn from these Passages. "We presume, say they, his Lordship could not be ignorant of the 19th Article of our Church, intituled, *Of the Church, viz. The visible Church of Christ is a Congregation of faithful Men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministred according to Christ's Ordinance, in all those things that are of necessity requisite to the same.* Though in Disparagement of this Article, by himself solemnly and often acknowledged, he asserts, p. 10. that *the Notion of the Church hath been so diversified by the various Alterations it hath undergone, that it is almost impossible so much as to number up the many inconsistent Images that have come by daily Additions to be united together in it.*" That these Words were spoken in Disparagement of, or in Contradiction to, the 19th Article; the Committee seem to have inferr'd from hence, viz. That his Lordship having undertaken to give a Description of the Church of Christ, he must be supposed to have put into that Description every thing that (in his Opinion) ought to be put in; and consequently that whatever Things have been mentioned by others in describing the Church, which are not mentioned by his Lordship, must be those Additions which his Lordship complains of. Now it is manifest that the Article mentions more Particulars as essential to the Notion of the Church, than are mentioned in his Lordship's Description. For the Article mentions it as necessary that the pure Word of God be preached, and the Sacraments duly administred, both which Particulars in his Lordship's Description are entirely left out. That this was the Sense of the Committee, appears plainly from the following Words. "We wish, say they, that in his Lordship's Account no Images necessary to form a just and true Notion of the Church had been left out; he omits even to mention the *preaching the Word or administring the Sacraments*, one of which, in the Words of the 27th Article of our Church, is a *Sign of Regeneration, or new Birth, whereby, as by an Instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church.*" So that his Lordship is here charged with having contradicted two Articles of our Church, viz. the 19th, where preaching the Word and Administring the Sacraments are expressly declared to be essential to the Notion of the Church; and the 27th, wherein one of these Sacraments; to wit, that of Baptism, is also declared to be that whereby Men are ingrafted into the Church.

THE Justice of this Charge is so very obvious, that there would be little need to say any thing to shew it, were it not for the Art and Contrivance which his Lordship has made use of in the Defence of himself. Were it true indeed, what his Lordship has insinuated, viz. that (x) a Man's being a sincere Subject of Jesus Christ, did necessarily imply his Use of the Sacraments, &c. his Lordship's Description of the Church, and that given in the 19th Article, would amount to the same. But this is not true. For he is a sincere Subject of Jesus Christ, in his Lordship's Sense of that Phrase, who sincerely follows the Will of Christ as it appears to him in the Gospel. Unless therefore it can be affirmed, that it is impossible for a Man sincerely to reject the Sacraments, it cannot be true that a Man's being sincerely a Subject of Jesus Christ, does necessarily imply his Use of the Sacraments. I have debated this Point so fully with his Lordship in another place, that 'tis needless to insist upon it any longer here. His Lordship indeed himself seems to have been sensible of the Weakness and Insufficiency of this Plea, and therefore he has provided us with another in case this should fail. The Plea is, that the 19th Article (y) defines — A PARTICULAR *visible Church*; whereas (z) he pretends to describe no other but THE UNIVERSAL *invisible Church*. I am surprized at his Lordship's Inconsistency!

(x) Ibid. Sect. 14. p. 79. and Sect. 15. p. 81.

(y) Sect. 14. p. 78.

(z) Sect. 12. p. 70.

It was but just now that he had been wondring at the Committee for calling his Description a Description of A Church, *i. e.* of a particular Church, and not THE Church, *i. e.* THE universal Church. And yet now, when he comes to explain the *Article*, he falls into the same Fault himself, and says it defines A Church, when the very Title of the *Article*, and the *Article* it self, shews that it defines not A Church, but THE Church! But his Lordship, I perceive, is not long of a Mind: for no sooner had he produced the *Article*, in order to compare it with his own *Description*, but he declares (the Truth it self extorting it from him) that (a) *the Article speaks* (not of A Church, but) *of THE Church!* A few Lines after he forgets himself again, and says, that *the Article describes those outward Acts which are necessary to make* (not THE Church, but) *A Church!* What shall one do with a Writer who runs backward and forward in such a manner as this! Every sober Reader must needs be sensible, without being led to it, that what this *Article* defines is not A PARTICULAR *visible Church*, but THE UNIVERSAL *visible Church*. THE VISIBLE Church of Christ, says the *Article*, *is a Congregation of faithful Men, &c.* This Word CONGREGATION his Lordship thinks fit to interpret as signifying a Number of Men *actually met together*, than which nothing can be more absurd. For the *Article* pretends to define not A Church, but THE Church, as is plain. But if it speaks (as his Lordship says it does) *of a CONGREGATION actually met together*, it must then in reality define not THE Church, but A Church. Again, The Church is here defined by *a Congregation*, therefore there must be a Congregation, or there can be no Church. Consequently, if by *a Congregation* you mean a Number of Men *actually met together*, you must say, that without a Number of Men *actually met together* there can be no Church, or in other Words, that a Number of Men cannot be the Church any longer than they are *actually met together*. By *a Congregation* therefore you must understand a Body or Collection of Men, whether met together or not met together. In this latter Sense his Lordship might have found the Word used, if he had but look'd to *Can. 55.* where *the Catholick Church of Christ* is explained by *the whole CONGREGATION of Christian People DISPERSED throughout the whole World.* So that the Sense of the *Article* is plainly this, that *the visible Church of Christ is the WHOLE NUMBER or AGGREGATE of those faithful Men, among whom the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments are duly administered, &c.* As this Interpretation puts no Force upon the Words, so it is the only one, so far as I can see, by which the *Article* can be made to speak consistently with it self.

THE *Article* then having defined the universal visible Church of Christ, it is plain that if his Lordship meant to describe to us the same Church, the *Article* must be contradicted by his Description. But to save himself from this, his Lordship, as you have seen, further tells us, that he *pretends to describe no other but the universal INVISIBLE Church.* It is under this Cover that the main Fallacy lies; and therefore that I may now set his Lordship's Notions in a clear Light, I must observe that the *invisible Church* is a Phrase nowhere to be found in Scripture, but invented by modern Divines, and used to signify those Members of the visible Church, who are inwardly and really what they outwardly profess themselves to be. If any Divines have used this Phrase in another Sense, I am not to answer for that; this I am certain of, that this is the only sound Sense in which it can be used, unless you'll say, either that there is no universal visible Church, or that there are two Sorts of universal Churches, the one visible, and the other invisible. But that the invisible Church, in this Sense, is not the Subject of his Lordship's Description, is manifest, 1st. From his Lordship's declar'd Design, which, he

(a) Sect. 14. p. 78.

tells us, was to describe THE Church, *i. e.* the UNIVERSAL Church; or, as he expresses it, the (b) WHOLE KINGDOM of Christ. Whereas he who describes the invisible Church, in the Sense wherein that Phrase is now used, does not describe the universal Church, or the whole Kingdom of Christ, but only a Part of it. 2dly, From the Nature of the Description it self, according to which, as is manifest, and I have elsewhere shewn, a Man may be a Member of the invisible Church, who is no Member of the visible one. Whereas the very Notion of the invisible Church, in this Sense, implies, that a Man cannot be a Member thereof, unless he be first of all a Member of the visible one. His Lordship's Intention therefore appears to me plainly to have been this, *viz.* To describe the universal Church of Christ in such a manner, as to make it to be no visible Society. As a probable Ground for this, I offer it to be considered, that his Lordship hath not, so much as once throughout this whole Dispute, made any mention of an universal visible Church, though he had frequent Opportunities of doing it, which I conceive he would hardly have slipt, had he been persuaded that the Word CHURCH, when used in an universal Sense, does in the Scripture Language denote a visible Society. But his Lordship's own Words will make this Matter clear beyond Exception. (c) *The Notion of the Church of Christ*, says he, AT FIRST was only the Number, small or great, of those who believed him to be the Messiah. His Lordship, I presume, will not deny that to be his Notion of the Church of Christ, which he apprehends was the Notion of it at first, *i. e.* which he apprehends to be the Scripture Notion of it. Now if the Notion of the Church be only the Number of those who believe Christ to be the Messiah, 'tis plain that the Notion of the Church does not imply a visible Society; because 'tis plain that a bare Belief in Jesus Christ as the Messiah, is not sufficient to gather Men into a visible Society. Agreeably to this Notion of the Universal Church, his Lordship has expressly thrown out all outward Acts (in which outward Acts visible Communion does consist) as not essential, or in any wise belonging to it. (d) *Outward Acts*, says he ——— are necessary to make A VISIBLE Church. By a visible Church his Lordship plainly means a particular Church; and when he says that outward Acts are necessary to make a visible Church, his Meaning is, that they are necessary to that, and to that ONLY, *i. e.* that they are not at all necessary to constitute the universal Church. This is evident from another Passage of the same Sort, wherein his Lordship declares that (e) VISIBLE OUTWARD SIGNS, belong to a VISIBLE Church AS SUCH. These outward Signs, his Lordship (which is very remarkable) extends even to the Publick Profession of Christianity. For the Committee having charged him with omitting, *preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments*, he says, *They might have added, he omits likewise the very PUBLICK PROFESSION of Christianity. And is not the Reason plain? Because I was not speaking of a VISIBLE Church, to which ALONE AS SUCH, visible outward Signs, or VERBAL PROFESSIONS belong; but of the UNIVERSAL INVISIBLE Church.*

I HOPE it will not now be any longer doubted, whether it was his Lordship's Intention to deny that the universal Church of Christ is a visible Society. But if any thing more be needful to be said upon this Point, it may be supplied from two other Passages which the Committee have found Fault with, and the Meaning of which we may now the better judge of. The Passages you will find in his Lordship's Sermon, Pag. 24, 25. where he tells us, that *the grossest Mistakes in Judgment about the Nature of Christ's Kingdom or Church, have arisen from hence, that Men have argued from other visible Societies, and other visible Kingdoms of this World, to what ought to be visible and sensible in his Kingdom; and that we must not frame our Ideas from the Kingdoms of this World, of what*

(b) Ibid.

(c) Serm. p. 10.

(d) Answ. to the Represent. Ibid. p. 79.

(e) Ibid. Sect. 15. p. 81.
ought

ought to be in a visible and sensible manner in his (Christ's) Kingdom. If his Lordship had said no more than this, that we must not argue from every thing in the Kingdoms of this World, that the same must be visible in the Kingdom of Christ; the Truth of his Assertion, as it could not reasonably, so I conceive it would not have been disputed: For certain it is, that there are many things visible in Human Societies, which are not visible in the Church of Christ. Thus, for Instance, in all Human Societies there is, and must be, some one or more visible Judge or Judges, by whose Sentence all Controversies relating to the Laws of such Societies are finally to be determined. But in the Church of Christ the Case is not so; in this there are no visible Judges, to whose Determinations concerning the Laws of Christ, others are bound to submit; and therefore he who in this Case, or in any other of the like Sort, should argue from the one to the other, must certainly run himself into very gross Mistakes. But that which his Lordship seems plainly to have intended by these Passages, is this, That we ought not to argue at all, or to frame any Ideas from the Kingdoms of this World, to what ought to be visible in the Kingdom of Christ; which is not true, if it be true that the Church is a visible Society. For some Ideas of visible things there must be, which are common to all visible Societies, *i. e.* the Ideas of all those things which constitute the Nature and Essence of a visible Society. Wherefore, though I may not argue, that because there are visible absolute Judges or Lawgivers in the Kingdoms of this World; therefore there are also visible absolute Judges or Lawgivers in the Kingdom of Christ; yet I may, and must argue, that because there are in all the Kingdoms of this World certain outward Laws by which the Subjects of each Kingdom are held together, or by Vertue whereof they become a visible Society; therefore there must also be the same in the Kingdom of Christ, because else the Kingdom of Christ could not be what it is now supposed to be, a visible Society.

THAT the Committee understood his Lordship as speaking in this latter Sense, is plain from the following Words. *Against such Arguings from visible Societies and earthly Kingdoms, his Lordship saith, our Saviour has positively warned us; and yet the Scripture Representations of the Church, do plainly express its Resemblance to other Societies* IN MANY RESPECTS; which implies, that in the Opinion of the Committee, his Lordship had taught that the Church resembles other Societies, *i. e.* visible or earthly Societies, in no respect. And though his Lordship now tells us, that *(f)* the Church does resemble other Societies in many Points, and that he never said, or so much as thought the contrary; yet he very plainly shews that he does think the contrary, even at the same time that he is endeavouring to dissemble it. For what are these many Points in which the Church resembles other Societies? Why, according to his Lordship's own Account they are no other than these, that *it has a King and a Judge over Subjects, i. e.* in short, the Resemblance between the Church and other Societies or Kingdoms, is this, and this only, that they are all Societies, or all Kingdoms. But I beseech his Lordship, what is this to the Purpose? That the Church is a Society or a Kingdom (for you may call it which you please) is agreed between us; the Question is, what Resemblance this Kingdom or Society bears to other Kingdoms. To say therefore, as his Lordship hath in effect said, that this Kingdom bears no other Resemblance to other Kingdoms than that it is a Kingdom, is, if I know any thing, to say that it bears no Resemblance to other Kingdoms at all. But there is no need for me to insist upon this: For when the Committee say that *the Scripture Representations of the Church do plainly express its Resemblance to other Societies in many Respects*, their Meaning is, that they express a visible Resemblance in many Respects. This is plain, be-

(f) Ibid. Sect. 12. p. 72, 74.

cause this was alledg'd against his Lordship's Assertion, that *we must not frame our Ideas from the Kingdoms of this World, of what ought to be in a VISIBLE and SENSIBLE manner in Christ's Kingdom.* That therefore which the Committee charge upon his Lordship is, that he hath taught that the Church doth not visibly resemble other Societies in any Respect: And the Justice of this Charge is, I think, now very apparent. For, 1. If we may not argue at all from other Societies, to what ought to be visible in the Church of Christ, if there are no Ideas of visible things common to both; there is then no visible Resemblance between them. Again, 2. If, as his Lordship says, the Kingdom of Christ resembles other Kingdoms in no other respect than this, *viz.* That it has a King and a Judge over Subjects; this likewise destroys all visible Resemblance between the Church and other Kingdoms. For a King and a Judge over Subjects there may be, though the Subjects of that Kingdom be not held together by any outward and visible Laws; and consequently, though there be no visible Resemblance between that and other Kingdoms. And this must here be the Case: For if his Lordship says that the Subjects of Christ's Kingdom are, as such, held together by any outward visible Laws, the Kingdom of Christ does in that respect resemble other Kingdoms, and consequently, it will not be true to say that it resembles other Kingdoms in no other respect than this, *viz.* That it hath a King and a Judge over Subjects. This then is his Lordship's Principle; that there is no visible Resemblance or Likeness between the Kingdom or universal Church of Christ, and other Kingdoms; which if it be true, it must then be a vain thing indeed to pretend to argue at all from what is visible in the one, to what ought to be visible in the other. And thus you see how his Lordship's Assertions clear up, and mutually support one another, and all end in the same general Conclusion, *viz.* That *the UNIVERSAL CHURCH of Christ is NO VISIBLE SOCIETY.*

AND now Reader, these things being thus laid together, pray judge for your self, whether his Lordship hath not plainly contradicted the *Articles* of our Church. The XIXth *Article* supposes the universal Church of Christ to be a visible Society, and lays down those outward Acts, in Vertue whereof its Members become a visible Society. His Lordship on the contrary maintains, that the universal Church is NO visible Society; and in consequence hereof, asserts that those outward Acts, *viz.* Preaching and hearing the Word, administering and receiving the Sacraments; yea, even the very Publick Profession of Christianity, have nothing to do with the Notion of Christ's universal Church, but belong only to the Idea of particular Churches. So that whereas the XXVIIth *Article* maintains that Baptism is that whereby they who receive it rightly, are grafted into THE Church; manifestly meaning thereby the universal Church; his Lordship in consequence of his Principles, must teach, that by Baptism Men are not grafted into the universal Church, but into some one or other particular Church only. This is truly the Case; and therefore if his Lordship should any longer insist upon this Plea, that he has pretended to describe no other but the universal INVISIBLE Church; tell him plainly that he answers truly, but nothing to the Purpose. For by this it seems as if he did not deny the universal VISIBLE Church, and had attempted at least in describing the universal INVISIBLE Church, to preserve the Notion of it intire: But no such Matter as this! No; his Lordship knows of no such thing as an universal VISIBLE Church, but in Contradiction both to our *Articles* and to the Scriptures, makes it to be altogether INVISIBLE. I say in Contradiction to the Scriptures. For I deny what his Lordship asserts without any manner of Proof, That *the Notion of the Church of Christ was, at first, only the Number of those who believed him to be the Messiah, i. e.* (as he himself explains this) *of those who subjected themselves to him as their King, in the Affair of Religion.* I deny this, I say, (in the Sense wherein he speaks it) and affirm on the contrary, that the Word *Church* when used in its utmost Latitute,

itude, constantly denotes in Scripture, (g) the Number of those who *continued steadfast in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, i. e.* who believed all the fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Religion, and who held Communion with the Apostles, and such Ministers, as according to their Directions, were lawfully set over them, and received the Sacraments from their Hands; and consequently who were joined together in one visible Society under Christ the Head. If his Lordship thinks fit to contradict me in this, and will maintain that all who believed Christ to be the Messiah, whether they were found in the Faith or not, whether they received the Sacraments, or whether they rejected them; whether they followed their lawful Ministers, or whether they followed false Teachers, were at first esteemed to be of the Church: If, I say, his Lordship will maintain this, I must beseech him not to deal by his Readers, as he did by his Audience, *i. e.* not barely to assert, but to prove it; and let him prove it when he can.

I CANNOT forbear, before I take my leave of this Point, to lead my Reader to the grand Principle which seems to have given Birth to this Notion, because I think it will not a little confirm what I have already laid down. Take it then from his Lordship's own Hand. (h) *What I said about inconsistent Images by daily Additions united in the Notion of the Church of Christ*——What was in his Lordship's Mind, think you, when he said this? Why he tells you, *I had in my Mind those Modern Images*——*those Modern Notions, which give such Account of particular Churches, as exclude from the Favour of God, and from the Church of Christ, many who will, I doubt not, come from the East and from the West, and sit down in the Kingdom of God.* The Secret, I think, is now out at once. His Lordship's Doctrine, you know, is, that all sincere Believers are equally intitled to the Benefits of the Gospel. Now since none are intitled to the Benefits of the Gospel, but those who are Members of the Church of Christ; what can be a more clear Consequence than this, that all sincere Believers are Members of Christ's Church! This is one way of writing Divinity! A Scheme is first of all raised according to a Man's own Fancy, and then the *Articles* and the *Scriptures* are torn and worried to Death, to make them speak his Sense! There is an evil Fate for ever attending upon such Projects as this; and amongst the many Misfortunes which his Lordship now labours under, this is none of the least, that this Notion, this comprehensive Notion of the Church of Christ, is yet too streight for his much more comprehensive Principles. According to his Lordship's Doctrine of Sincerity, not only sincere Believers, but sincere Persons of all sorts, sincere Jews, sincere Turks, sincere Heathens, are all of them (as I have shewn in treating upon that Subject) equally intitled to the Benefits of the Gospel. And must not all these then be taken into the Church of Christ? Yes, if you can tell how. But though his Lordship's Principle requires it, yet his Description will not do it; and how then shall we contrive? I will commit his Lordship to the Conduct of one, whose Company perhaps he may like better than mine, and who is able to let him into the Secret; I mean the famous Quaker Robert Barclay. His Words are these.

UNDER this CHURCH (*i. e.* under the universal Church) are comprehended all, and as many, of whatsoever Nation, Kindred, Tongue, or People they be (though outwardly Strangers, and remote from those who profess Christ——) as become obedient to the HOLY LIGHT and TESTIMONY of God in their Hearts——For this is the universal or Catholick Spirit, by which many are called from all THE FOUR CORNERS of the Earth, and shall SIT DOWN with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.——There may be Members therefore of the Catholick Church both among Heathens, Turks, Jews, and all the several sorts of Christians——of INTEGRITY and SIMPLICITY of Heart, &c. Barclay, *Apol. Prop.* 10. p. 404, 405. *Fol. Edit.*

(g) Comp. Act. 2. 41, 42, 47.

(h) Ibid. Sect. 14. p. 80.

SEE here! This great Apostle of Sincerity affirms roundly, that a Jew, a Heathen, a Turk, may be a Member of the Catholic Church! Strange, you'll say, that a Man should be capable of being of the Church of Christ, who does not so much as believe in Christ! But no matter for that. This Man understood his own Principles. He was of his Lordship's Mind, that ALL *who are obedient to the holy Light, ALL of Integrity and Simplicity of Heart, i. e.* (as his Lordship would say) ALL *sincere Persons*, are intitled to the Benefits of the Gospel. He was not so uncharitable as to suppose that a Jew or a Heathen could not be sincere, and therefore he said what he found himself obliged to say, that a Jew or a Heathen might be a Member of the Catholick Church. His Lordship then sees the way how to make his Description of the Church adequate to the Extensiveness of his Principles. 'Tis but giving up one small Point more, and the Work is done. 'Tis but throwing out the Belief of Jesus Christ, and he will agree with the *Quakers* and with himself too. — But I hope for better things, and that his Lordship will at length be made sensible, how impossible it is that those Notions should be true, which end in such absurd and extravagant Consequences.

CHAP. II.

Of a Regular Succession in the Ministry.

THE next Point to be taken notice of is a Regular Succession in the Ministry, and particularly in the *Episcopal Order*, which the Committee charge his Lordship with having *thrown Contempt upon*, by calling it a *Trifle*, a *Nicety*, a *Dream*, and an *Invention of Men*. His Lordship denies this Charge; (i) *I have never*, says he, *thrown the least Contempt upon a regular Succession of Ministers in general, or of Bishops in particular*. His Defence you have in a few Words. (k) *What I have bestowed these Words upon, is a regular uninterrupted Succession, made absolutely necessary to the Favour of God; without which the sincerest Christians shall not arrive at the Happiness of Heaven*.

HERE is then a Case of Fact to be stated between his Lordship and the Committee, viz. whether his Lordship be justly chargeable with having thrown Contempt upon a regular Succession. And in order hereto there are two Things which I observe in this Plea, viz. 1. That his Lordship distinguishes between a regular Succession and an uninterrupted Succession, and declares that what he hath said about Successions, relates nor to the former, but to the latter. 2. That his Lordship plainly insinuates as if what he had called a *Nicety*, a *Trifle*, a *Dream*, and an *Invention of Men*, was not simply even an uninterrupted Succession, but an interrupted Succession made absolutely necessary to the Favour of God. Now as to the first of these, viz. his Lordship's Distinction, it seems to me to be founded in no real Difference, i. e. if you understand the Words in a large or general Signification. For a Succession can be said to be uninterrupted only with respect to that Rule or Method, whatever it be, according to which that Succession ought to proceed; consequently an uninterrupted Succession means neither more nor less than a Succession, the Order, i. e. the Regularity whereof has not been broken. To say therefore in general that a Succession may be interrupted, and yet regular, or regular and yet interrupted, is to say that which implies in it a palpable Contradiction. There is but one way then by which this Distinction can possibly be made to bear, which is, by considering the Regula-

(i) Answ. to the Repref. Chap. 1. Sect. 18. p. 89.

(k) Ibid. p. 90.

rity of the Succession according to one Rule, and the Uninterruptedness according to another: And this I take to be truly the Case. By a regular Succession his Lordship means (or he means nothing) such a Succession of Persons in the Ministry, as is agreeable to that Rule or Method which God has appointed for the Conveyance of the Ministerial Office. When he speaks of an uninterrupted Succession, he does not, he cannot speak with respect to the same Rule; for then, as I have shewn, a regular Succession and an uninterrupted Succession will be the same. He speaks then with respect to some other Rule. And what Rule is that? Why, that Rule which makes it necessary that the Ministerial Power, which was first given by Christ to his Apostles, should have been conveyed by them to others, and from those again to others, and so on successively throughout all Ages. This is what Men constantly understand when they speak of an uninterrupted Succession of Ministers, even an Order or Succession of Men, amongst whom the Ministerial Office has been constantly handed down from one to another. And that this is what his Lordship means by an uninterrupted Succession, is plain from another Passage in the same Paragraph, where his Distinction is, I think, more accurately expressed. *I think, says he, there may be REGULARITY preserved, (i. e. that the Ministerial office may be conveyed regularly, or according to God's Appointment) without the Supposition of a SUCCESSION absolutely UNINTERRUPTED from the beginning.*

THIS then is his Lordship's Opinion, That a Man may lawfully, or according to God's Appointment, be called to the Ministry, though his Commission be not derived to him through an uninterrupted Succession; which Observation, if it were true, contributes nothing towards removing the Charge of the *Committee*. The *Committee* say that his Lordship has thrown Contempt upon a Regular Succession. His Lordship replies in effect, that what he hath said, relates not to a Regular Succession, but to an uninterrupted Succession. But what if the *Committee* know of no regular Succession which is not uninterrupted, *i. e.* what if they know of no Rule or Method by which the Ministerial Office can be conveyed, but what necessarily implies an uninterrupted Succession? Why then, I think, 'tis plain, that with the *Committee* a regular Succession and an uninterrupted Succession will be all one, and consequently, that his Lordship by alledging, that what he hath said relates only to an uninterrupted Succession, will not have denied any thing which the *Committee* hath affirmed. Now this, for any thing that appears to the contrary in the *Representation*, was in Truth the Case, which methinks his Lordship should have a little consider'd, before he had been so very free in censuring the *Committee*. "Not to trouble your Lordships (*say they*) with the Contempt thrown on a regular Succession of the Ministry, and of your own Order in particular, for which his Lordship has found no better Words than *Trifles, Niceties, Dreams, Inventions of Men, &c.*" In which Words, (*says the Bishop in his Answer*) *it is implied that I have found no better Words than these for a regular Succession of the Ministry, and of Bishops in particular.* Then follows this severe Reflection; *I am confident, if they could have shewn this evidently, they would not have scrupled it merely for fear of giving my Lords the Bishops a little Trouble, but would have produced the very Passages in which this is done. Till they are so just as to do this, I must deny that there are any such Passages, &c.* This, if I mistake not, amounts to a heavy Charge: For his Lordship here manifestly supposes that the *Committee* had accused him of something, which they knew in their own Consciences they were not able to prove, and industriously passed it over, under the Colour of not being troublesome to the Bishops. His Lordship himself speaks thus much: (1) *It would (says he) be much more honourable for the learned Committee to enter openly into this Matter, and to maintain that plain essential Point of Uninterrupted Suc-*

(1) Ibid. p. 91.

cession, than to hint at things in such a manner, as represents them in quite another Light than that in which I have spoke of them in my Book, and this UNDER THE PRETENCE of not troubling the Bishops. I will presume to say, that it would have been much more honourable for his Lordship to have spared this Reflection. For what Ground is there for such an Imputation? Why, the main Pretence you have already heard, *viz.* That his Lordship thinks there may be Regularity without an uninterrupted Succession; thence he infers, that the Committee must needs have thought so too; and in consequence hereof, must have knowingly and wittingly charged him with that which they found themselves unable to prove! But surely his Lordship ought to have been very certain, that the Committee had the same Notion about Regularity which he has, before he had been (as he expresses himself) confident that they were guilty of so much Dishonesty. For, as I just now observed, if the Committee thought that an uninterrupted Succession was the only way by which Holy Orders can be conveyed regularly, or according to God's Appointment, it was manifestly the same thing whether they called it a regular Succession, or an uninterrupted Succession: But there is not the least Hint in the *Representation*, by which any one can be induced so much as to suspect, that the Committee had any other Notions of Regularity in this Case, than what supposes an uninterrupted Succession; and there needs not, I think, any great Penetration to discern that the Committee are, even in his Lordship's own Opinion, of the Number of those who plead for an uninterrupted Succession. For why else does his Lordship cry out, *It would be more honourable for the Committee to maintain the Point of uninterrupted Succession?* Were the Committee bound in Honour to maintain a Point, which in their own Consciences they thought ought not to be maintained? Let any one now judge of the Case, and see with how much Decency his Lordship has complain'd of *Calumny* from others, who has not scrupled upon so slender a Foundation to lay so bitter, (or to use a Word which his Lordship loves to repeat) so *cruel* an Accusation against a venerable Body of Men.

To proceed; the Charge of the Committee relating (for ought that appears to the contrary) to an uninterrupted Succession, it may then possibly stand good, if it be true that his Lordship has thrown Contempt upon that. But even this his Lordship seems willing to dissemble. For,

2. His Lordship plainly insinuates as if what he has called a *Trifle*, a *Nicety*, a *Dream*, &c. was not simply an uninterrupted Succession, but an uninterrupted Succession made absolutely necessary to the Favour of God. This his Lordship farther supports in his *Answer to a late Book written by the Reverend Dr. Sherlock*, p. 97. *The regular Succession* (says he) *which I ever called the Invention of Men, a Nicety, &c. was no other but a regular uninterrupted Succession, expressly considered as something made absolutely necessary to the Eternal Salvation of Christians.* Which is as much as to say (for so the Words imply) that he had called an uninterrupted Succession a *Nicety*, a *Trifle*, a *Dream*, &c. *then*, and then only, when made necessary, or when considered as necessary to Eternal Salvation. His Lordship surely found himself under some Difficulty, when he was induced to make such a Plea as this, in which I may presume to say, that there is neither Truth nor Consistency! Not Consistency; for 1. To say that an uninterrupted Succession is then, and then only, a *Trifle* and a *Nicety*, when considered as absolutely necessary to Salvation, is to say, that an uninterrupted Succession when considered as absolutely necessary to Salvation, does then, and then only, signify nothing to Salvation; which is not Sense. 2. To say that an uninterrupted Succession is then, and then only, a *Dream*, and an *Invention of Men*, when considered as absolutely necessary to Salvation, is a manifest Absurdity: For if an uninterrupted Succession be at all a *Dream*, and an *Invention of Men*, it must be so, consider it how you will. The being made necessary to Salvation, or not necessary, cannot in the least alter the Case, *i. e.* it cannot

not either make that which is an Invention, to be no Invention, or that which is not an Invention, to be an Invention. If it could, I must tell his Lordship, that even his own regular Succession may be an Invention, as well as an uninterrupted Succession. But why this to his Lordship, who not only sees this Consequence, but what is more, will stand by it? (m) *The Dean, (says he) himself acknowledges, even A REGULAR Succession, made absolutely necessary, to be an unwarrantable Extreme, and consequently, an Invention of Men: MUCH MORE is a REGULAR UNINTERRUPTED Succession*——How my Lord! Does the *Dean* acknowledge a regular Succession——to be an unwarrantable Extreme! I will answer for him that he acknowledges no such thing: But I hope in the mean time that I may have leave to infer, that you your self do acknowledge what you are pleased to say the *Dean* acknowledges; and consequently, that you do acknowledge even a regular Succession (in your own Sense of that Word) when made absolutely necessary, to be an Invention. Upon the same Terms his Lordship very consistently declares, he should not in the least scruple to call even a regular Succession a Trifle and a Nicety. For speaking of Regularity in general, he says, that though he has (n) *not dropt one Word against it, yet when Men are come to lay the eternal Salvation of Christians upon it, he is not afraid of calling it comparatively a Trifle and a Nicety.* Every thing that is a Trifle or a Nicety, must be so comparatively, or with respect to something. With respect to what then is it, that his Lordship is not afraid to call even a regular Succession a Trifle, and a Nicety? Why, every one sees that it must be with respect to Salvation, or with respect to nothing. And this his Lordship owns to be his Meaning a few Lines after, where he explains this *Comparatively*, by, *with respect to the Terms of Salvation.* Behold then how happily his Lordship has refined upon this Controversy! So very nice and subtil is he in his Distinctions, that he has not left the difference so much as of a Hairs breadth between that which he denies, and that which he affirms! The *Committee* have charged him with calling a regular Succession a Trifle, a Nicety, a Dream, &c. Hereupon his Lordship heavily complains of unjust Dealing; declares that he has not dropt one Word against Regularity, (*i. e.* Regularity in general) and that what he hath said relates only to that particular Sort of Regularity, which supposes it necessary that the Ministerial Power should have been handed down from Man to Man, by an uninterrupted Succession from the Apostles: And yet in the very same Breath, as it were, he tells his Reader that he is ready to call even Regularity, *i. e.* every Sort or Kind of Regularity, a Nicety, and a Trifle, if any one be disposed to provoke him to it, *i. e.* if any one shall take a Fancy to maintain that it is absolutely necessary to the Salvation of Christians! So far therefore as I can perceive, the *Committee*, according to his Lordship's own Account of himself, were only unhappy in this, that they could not look into his Lordship's Heart: For setting this aside, they would not have been so very much out of the way, if they had charged him with throwing Contempt upon Regularity in any Sense; unless his Lordship will shew me what real Difference there is between calling any thing a Nicety, and a Trifle; and being ready to call it so upon a proper Occasion.

BUT to return; It may be thought perhaps, that when his Lordship says that an uninterrupted Succession, made necessary, or considered as made necessary to the Favour of God, is a Trifle, and a Nicety, &c. his Meaning is, not that an uninterrupted Succession it self is a Trifle and a Nicety, but that the making such a Succession absolutely necessary to the Favour of God, is a Trifle, and a Nicety, &c. This scarce brings his Lordship's Plea to sound Sense; And yet he seems willing to be thus understood. This I gather from hence, that his Lordship has taken some Pains to possess his Readers with an Opinion, that the only thing which he had opposed in his *Preservative*, was the laying

(m) Answ. to a late Book, &c. p. 97.

(n) Answ. to the Repref. *Ibid.*

too much Stress upon an uninterrupted Succession, *i. e.* the making such a Succession absolutely necessary to the Salvation of Christians. (o) *Whether* (says he) *this be to throw Contempt upon a Matter, TO LAY NO MORE STRESS upon it than it can bear; or whether it be not a much more effectual Method of throwing Contempt upon it, to be always treating Matters of*—REGULARITY, as *Matters of ESSENCE, and of ABSOLUTE NECESSITY to Salvation, and TO PUT MEN'S ETERNAL HAPPINESS upon an UNINTERRUPTED Succession.*—Others must judge for themselves. These Words, I say, are a very plain Insinuation, that the only Reason he had given the Committee to charge him with having thrown Contempt upon a regular, *i. e.* an uninterrupted Succession, was his having pleaded against putting Men's eternal Happiness upon an uninterrupted Succession, or the making such a Succession absolutely necessary to Salvation. The Question therefore now is, whether this be the true State of the Case or not: and this will very quickly be resolved by reciting a few plain Passages, both out of his Lordship's *Preservative* and his *Answer to the Representation*, which take as follows.

WHEN *they* (the Nonjurors) *would allarm you*—by telling you, that you cannot hope for the Favour of God, but in the strictest Communion with their Church, which is—governed by Bishops in a REGULAR SUCCESSION; that God hath himself hung your Salvation upon THIS NICETY, &c. *Preservat.* p. 77. Again: Tell them that in Fact there must have been frequent INTERRUPTIONS in the SUCCESSION of the Christian Clergy;—that you do not put the Cause of the Reformation upon SUCH TRIFLES. *Ibid.* p. 88. Again: You cannot put either their or your own eternal Salvation upon their REGULAR ORDINATION, and UNBROKEN SUCCESSION from the Apostles; because this would be to put it upon THE INVENTION OF MEN. *Ibid.* Once more: You—ought—not to be afraid of—the VAIN WORDS of REGULAR and UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSIONS—Nullity or Validity of God's Ordinances to the People, upon account of NICETIES and TRIFLES, or any other the like DREAMS. *Ibid.* p. 98. There needs no Comment upon these Passages to shew, that what his Lordship calls a Trifle, a Nicety, vain Words, &c, is not the making an uninterrupted Succession absolutely necessary to the Salvation of Christians, but an uninterrupted Succession it self. If now you look into his *Answer to the Representation*, you will find it there treated in the same decent manner. *The laying such a Stress upon what can never be proved (i. e. the making an uninterrupted Succession absolutely necessary to Salvation)*—I call laying a Stress upon what is truly, with respect to the Terms of Salvation, A TRIFLE; what is truly A NICETY—upon the DREAMS and INVENTIONS of Men, p. 90.

IF then to say that an uninterrupted Succession is a Trifle, a Nicety, vain Words, a Dream, and an Invention of Men, be to throw Contempt upon it, his Lordship you see has thrown Contempt upon it. And indeed, setting all this aside, he hath said enough to shew how little a thing it is in his Eyes. In his *Preservative* he tells us that *the Gospel lays NO Stress upon this Matter*, p. 88. In his *Answer to the Representation* he affirms, that *our Saviour never laid ANY Weight upon it, with respect to the future Estate of his Subjects*, p. 90. In his *Preservative* again we have it, that *God's Providence never yet IN FACT KEPT UP a REGULAR UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION of rightful Bishops, so far as we can judge of Things*, p. 72. Nay, that *it hath not pleased GOD to keep up any Proof of the least PROBABILITY or MORAL POSSIBILITY of a REGULAR UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION; but that there is a GREAT APPEARANCE, and humanly speaking A CERTAINTY of the CONTRARY.* That *this REGULAR UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION of Persons qualified and REGULARLY ORDAINED, is a Matter IMPOSSIBLE*

(o) *Ibid.*

TO BE PROVED; nay, that THE CONTRARY is MORE THAN PROBABLE upon all historical Evidence which we receive in other Cases, p. 78, 79. To the same purpose in his Answer to the Representation: A REGULAR UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION, says he, is what CAN NEVER BE PROVED. It is that of which the most learned must have the least Assurance, and the unlearned can have NO NOTION but through IGNORANCE and CREDULITY, p. 91. If this be not throwing Contempt upon an uninterrupted Succession, I must confess I understand not what Contempt means; and therefore I was surprized to find his Lordship endeavouring to evade this Charge, which lay so full against him, which in effect he had, in his Answer to the Representation, own'd at other times, even in the same Paragraph; and what should tempt his Lordship to it, I am not able to imagine, unless it were that he might make room for Variety of Answers, according to the different Sentiments of his Admirers. But Decency forbids me to pass those Reflections which his Lordship's Conduct in this Particular would naturally suggest to me. I shall therefore leave this Matter to be considered by his Lordship, and I heartily wish he may be able to give a better Account of it to his own Conscience, than I am able to give of it to the World.

A D E F E N C E

Of the FIRST HEAD of the REPORT of
the COMMITTEE of the lower House
of CONVOCATION.

P A R T II.

Wherein the Doctrines censured by the COMMITTEE in the
said Charge are examined.

SECTION I.

Of Church-Communion.

CHAP. I.

*Containing some general Preliminaries introductory to the present
Question.*

HA V I N G thus, as briefly as I could, dispatch'd the first Branch of this Controversy, by shewing that his Lordship hath in fact taught the Doctrines charged upon him by the Committee; I proceed to the Second (which is of greater Importance) viz. Whether these Doctrines be worthy of Censure, which must depend entirely upon the Consonancy of them to Reason, and to the Word of God. In treating upon this Subject, it will be necessary for me to invert the Order in which I began, and

Speak first to the Point of Church-Communion; to which the other concerning Church-Authority being plainly relative, it will therefore be a vain thing to go about to establish the latter, without shewing the Necessity of the former. Two things then are here to be noted; *viz.*

1. THAT by Church-Communion, we mean the mutual Fellowship or Agreement of Men one with another, in the Faith and Obedience of the Gospel. For the Church being the whole Number of those, who believe in Christ and observe his Laws, as made known and declared in and by the Gospel; Communion with the Church, must import an Agreement or Fellowship with them, in these things, because 'tis in vertue of these things that they are denominated or do become the Church. So that to say that Church-Communion is a thing necessary, is in other Words to say that it is necessary for every Man to believe and obey the Gospel. It is to be noted

2. THAT when we say that Church-Communion is necessary, our meaning only is that it is necessary with respect to our Right or Title to Christ's Heavenly Kingdom, or to those Rewards in a Life to come which are offered to Mankind by the Gospel. And here lies the great Point between his Lordship and his Opposers. He maintains that all sincere Persons, of what Religion or Persuasion soever they be, are upon the same Foot with respect to their Title to God's Favour and Salvation; Now if this be true, it will follow (as has been already shewn) that all such Persons must be intitled to Christ's Kingdom; For whatever difference there may be in point of Excellency between the Kingdom of Christ, and all other supposeable States in a Life to come; it is a clear Case that where all are upon an equal Foot none can be excluded. It lies upon us therefore to shew that the Kingdom of Christ does of Right belong to those only who believe and obey the Gospel, and this is what I shall now endeavour. Only let it be observed and carefully attended to, that I do by no means undertake to determine, nor am obliged to determine what will in Fact be the final Portion of other good Men; much less shall I pretend to set bounds to the Mercy of Almighty God in bestowing or not bestowing the Heavenly Rewards according to his good Pleasure. 'Tis one thing to say what God may do if he sees so fit, or what, considering the Perfection of his Nature, he probably will do; and another to say what we can claim from him in the way of Title or Covenant: the want of observing which Distinction has occasioned great Confusion in this Subject, and given birth to many false Consequences in prejudice of what has been advanced on this side of the Question, as will be seen in going along. This being premised I go directly to the Point under Consideration; in handling which my Method shall be first of all thetically to propound and maintain what I take to be the true Doctrine, and then to give an answer to all the material Objections that have been made against it, as they fall in my way.

THE Question then is, Whether Sincerity in some particular Method of Religion appointed by God, and in particular, whether Sincerity in the Faith and Obedience of the Gospel, be not necessary to intitle us to the Rewards of the Gospel. For the clearing of which it must be observed, That no one can have a Title to these Rewards in vertue of his own Merits, but only through the Merits and Satisfaction of Jesus Christ. In this Assertion I am the more secure, because I have the current Testimony of the Holy Scripture to support me in it, which every where speaks of Eternal Life, not as what we can have a Right to in vertue of any thing that we can do our selves; but as a Matter of mere Grace and Favour through Christ, for whose Sake what we do, though it deserves not such a Reward, is yet accepted as a Condition upon which God will bestow it. *By Grace ye are saved,* says the Apostle, *and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God. Not of Works lest any Man should boast,* Eph. 2. 8, 9. Again Rom. 6. 23. *The Gift of God is eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Lord. Indeed, setting aside the Merits and Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, we are so far from having a Claim to the Gospel Reward, that we have properly speaking no Claim to any Reward at all. For 1. All we can do, even the most perfect Obedience, is no more than what we do in Justice owe to our great Creator. Now that which is only the Discharge of a just Debt on the one hand, can be no Ground for the Claim of a Reward on the other. The Judgment of our blessed Lord upon this very Case ought not to be forgotten, as it is recorded *Luke 17. 7, 8, 9, 10.* Which of you having a Servant plowing or feeding Cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the Field, Go and sit down to Meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thy self and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken: and afterward thou shalt eat and drink. Doth he thank that Servant, because he did the Things which were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those Things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable Servants; we have done that only which was our Duty to do. But 2. There neither are nor ever were any among even the best of Men, who have done every thing that it was their Duty to do; For in many things we offend all, *Jam. 3. 2.* Now so far as we have offended, so far we deserve Punishment; and it cannot be that we should both deserve Punishment, and have a Claim to a Reward in reference to one and the same Law. This is the Argument which the Apostle St. Paul mainly insists upon, to convince both Jew and Gentile of the Insufficiency of the Law of Works to Justification. We have proved, says he, that both Jews and Gentiles are all under Sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no not one; There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the Way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no not one, *Rom. 3. 9, 10, 11, 12.* Again *ver. 23.* All have sinned and come short of the Glory of God. Now the Inference which he draws from hence you have at *ver. 20,* and *24.* Therefore by the Deeds of the Law there shall no Flesh be justified in his Sight, nor any other way, than freely by his Grace through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

I do not hereby intend to detract from those Natural Evidences which we have of the Certainty of a Future State of Happiness or Misery, for All Men. That these Evidences are sufficiently convincing to any who will impartially consider them, I very readily own; But then I must observe, that they do not at all rely upon this, that any Man has or can have in the Notion of strict Justice, a Claim or Title to be rewarded; but principally upon those Notions we have concerning the Manner, according to which it is fitting in the way of Equity that God should deal with his undeserving Creatures. The happy Experience of every Day does abundantly shew us, that God does not make our Merits the Standard of his Bounty. For his Sun riseth upon the Evil, and he sendeth Rain upon the Unjust. Wherefore though no Man has any thing which he can arrogate to himself, yet since God very frequently bestows his Favours upon those who least deserve them, certainly those who deserve them most, have Reason to expect a proportionable Share. For should God observe no Proportion in bestowing his Favours, although he being no Man's Debtor, could not be said to deal unjustly, yet he would deal unequitably. Now since this is manifestly the Case in this Life; since here, under the Sun all Things happen alike to all Men, and the very best of Men have frequently the greatest Share of Misfortunes; hence we very rationally conclude, that there will be a Future State, wherein this Inequality shall be adjusted; where all Men shall be dealt with in such a manner, as will bespeak God to be what indeed he is, in the most supreme and perfect Degree, an Enemy to Vice, and a Lover of Vertue.

THIS seems to me to be the strongest and best Argument that the Light of Nature affords, for the Belief of a Future State; and the Inference, I think, will go no farther than I have carried it here. Now this you see is very consistent with the Supposal of no Claim or Title on the Part of Man; and as

to those Arguments which may be drawn from the Wisdom and Goodness of God, they have plainly no relation to any such Claim, yea the latter Sort do manifestly exclude it. But whatever might be alledged from the Light of Nature, to prove a Title to a Reward in general, I am sure nothing can be offered sufficient to prove a Title to the Rewards of the Gospel. For what Proportion is there between our Services and an eternal Recompence? Or who will say that the better Sort of Men (for good there are none strictly speaking) cannot be made amends for that disproportionate Measure of Unhappiness which they have met with in this Life, unless God bestows upon them the Kingdom of Heaven? Now the necessary Consequence of all this is, That wheresoever there is a Title to the Rewards of the Gospel, that Title must be founded upon a special Covenant of Grace, *i. e.* it must be founded upon Promise. And hence it will follow, That God may dispose of these Rewards upon what Terms and Conditions he pleases. For to say that our Title to the Gospel Rewards is founded solely upon the Promise of God, is to say that antecedently to any Promise God is not bound to bestow them upon any; and he who is at Liberty either to bestow a Reward or not to bestow it, may certainly do it upon his own Terms. If then there be any Conditions prescribed by God, upon the Performance of which only the Gospel Rewards are promised (as confessedly there are) it will be most evident, That whatsoever those Conditions are, they must be performed, or we can have no Title to those Rewards; it being the nature of all conditional Promises, that the Promise it self can never be claimed, where any Condition upon which it was made, is wanting. Now *the Conditions* upon which God has promised the Reward of Eternal Life, can be learned no where but from his positive declared Will. His declared Will in this Case, can be learned no where but from the Gospel; the Consequence of which is, that no one has or can have a Title to the Rewards of the Gospel, but he who performs the Conditions laid down in the Gospel.

I HAVE now brought the Reader to the Revealed Will of God, as to the only sure Foundation upon which we can fix our Title to Eternal Life; which it was very necessary for me to do, because how customary soever it is with his Lordship and his Friends to set forth the Scripture as the only proper Rule of deciding Controversies in Religion, yet it has been as constant a Method with them in this particular Debate to forget themselves, and to substitute their own Reasonings in the room of it. Instead of shewing us what the Gospel has promised to mere Sincerity, his Lordship has told us what he thinks ought to be concluded from the Notions we have of God, which is to remove the Controversy from the Scripture to Natural Reason, and (in my Judgment) to prescribe the Terms of Salvation to God, instead of accepting them from him. But I may have Occasion to take notice of this afterwards; that which I would now chiefly advertise the Reader of, is, That when I say that none have a Title to the Rewards of the Gospel, but those who have performed the Conditions of the Gospel, I speak only in reference to those who have lived since the Gospel has been promulged. I make no doubt but that Eternal Life was attainable before the Coming of Christ; upon what Terms Men were then *intituled* to it, it is neither necessary nor pertinent for me to inquire. The Point is, what are now the Terms of Salvation; and these are certainly all those Terms which are prescribed in the Gospel. For this being the last Revelation of God's Will to Mankind, the Conditions there prescribed must be the Conditions now in Force, and consequently, the only Conditions upon the Performance whereof our Title to Eternal Life can now be founded. The Controversy then must rest upon this single Question, *viz.* Whether SINCERITY be the ONLY Condition required in the Gospel, *i. e.* whether the Gospel has annexed the Promise of Eternal Life not to any one particular Method of Religion sincerely embraced, but to all Methods indifferently under the same Condition. This I say is the Question, and on which Side of it the Truth lies, is what I shall now endeavour to determine.

C H A P. II.

An Introduction towards the Resolution of the present Question, in reference to Unbelievers.

THE Controversy relating (as has been said just now) to all sincere Persons without Exception, it will be proper to begin with the Case of Unbelievers, *i. e.* of those who have not received the Gospel as the Rule of their Religion, or (which is the same thing) who have not embraced Christ as their King and Lawgiver. Now there are two Sorts of Unbelievers, *viz.* 1. Such as have not had the Gospel preached to them, nor the Means or Opportunity of coming to the Knowledge of it. And 2. Such as have had the Gospel preached to them, or might have had it, but for their own Neglect. As to those who carelessly neglect coming to the Knowledge of the Gospel whilst it is in their Power, their Case is the same with those, who having heard, wilfully reject it; these therefore fall not under the present Question. And as to those who having had the Gospel preached to them, reject it sincerely, their Case needs not be distinctly considered; for the Gospel carrying with it sufficient Evidence of its being a Divine Revelation, if any to whom it is preached, reject it sincerely, it must (according to the Notion of Sincerity we are now proceeding upon) arise merely from hence, that they are not sufficiently qualified by natural Abilities to discover that Evidence. Now 'tis in effect the same thing whether a Divine Revelation be propounded to such, or whether it be not propounded. The Case of these therefore is the same with the Case of those to whom the preaching of the Gospel never came; or if there be any difference between them, it can give no Advantage to the former above the latter. The having had a Tender of the Gospel, may be the Occasion of rendering a Man's Condition much the worse; and certainly is so, whenever it is obstinately and wilfully rejected. But if it be rejected with the utmost Sincerity, it cannot possibly make his Condition better; it can only leave him (to speak most favourably) in the same State he was in before.

THE only Case therefore which is necessary to be considered at this time, is the Case of those to whom the Gospel has not been made known; and concerning these, the Inquiry is, whether the Gospel has declared them Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, or Eternal Life, on Condition of their Sincerity. The Reader will doubtless observe, that the Meaning of this Question is not barely this, *viz.* Whether such Persons are declared Heirs of Eternal Life on Condition of their sincere Obedience to the Law of Nature; for the Dispute is concerning mere Sincerity, or Sincerity as such. Now sincere Obedience is one thing, mere Sincerity, or Sincerity as such, is another. He only is sincerely obedient, who sincerely does that which the Law commands; but the very Question supposes, that a Man may be sincere, although he does not that which the Law commands; yea, although he doth that which the Law expressly forbids. This holds as well with respect to the Law of Nature, as it does in reference to the Law of the Gospel; for the Law of Nature is that Law or Rule of Behaviour which results from the relation which we and our Actions bear, or stand in to God the supreme Being, and to the Persons and Things about us. Of this Law Right Reason is the Promulgation, and consequently so far as a Man departs from Right Reason, so far he departs from the Law of Nature. But how far soever a Man may depart from Right Reason, he is still sincere if he thinks that he acts reasonably; provided he thinks so merely for want of Natural Abilities to think or judge otherwise.

THOSE therefore who maintain universally that Sincerity as such, or mere Sincerity, gives Men a Right or Title to Eternal Life, must say, that the Gospel has declared on the Behalf of all those whose Lot it may be not to live under the Ministration of it, that God will bestow upon them the Reward of Eternal Life, if they be sincere, whether they sincerely obey the Law of Nature, or whether they sincerely depart from it; because, if it be supposed in reference to such, that God has promised this Reward on Condition only of their sincere Observance of the Law of Nature, their Title will then depend not upon their Sincerity merely, but upon their Sincerity under some one particular Method of Religion, prescribed or appointed by God. Now it would be sufficient for my Purpose to rest the Point upon this single Issue, and I am well assured 'tis what they will not find themselves able to prove; but I chuse rather to take a larger View of the Case before us; for I am verily persuaded, and in Justice to the Gospel it ought, I think, to be insisted upon, that since the Coming of the *Messiah*, and the first Promulgation of his Laws to Mankind, Christianity is the only Method of Religion which can give us a Title to the Reward of Eternal Life; the Gospel containing no Assurance of that Reward, to any but those who shall hear and embrace it. If this be the Case, Unbelievers of all sorts will be excluded, and the Controversy thus far effectually decided. This then is what I shall now undertake to prove; and in order hereto I lay down the following Propositions, *viz.*

1. THAT forasmuch as there is no such thing as perfect, unfinning Obedience; therefore the Benefit of Eternal Life always presupposes the Remission of Sin; and consequently, he who has no Claim or Title to the latter, can have none to the former.

2. THAT the Gospel every where speaks of Remission of Sin, as the Gift of God in Christ. *In whom* (says the Apostle) *i. e.* in Christ Jesus, *we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins*, Eph. 1. 7. Colos. 1. 14. To this belong all those Places where Christ is said to be a *Sacrifice*, or a *Propitiation* for our Sins; and where we are said to be *purchased, ransomed, redeemed* by the Blood of Christ, and the like; these Places, I say, do all of them abundantly shew, that the Forgiveness of Sin is a matter of mere Grace and Favour derived upon us, in and through Jesus Christ; and so indeed it must necessarily be; For what is sinful Man able to do that can merit Pardon and Reconciliation? The most that he can do is to repent, *i. e.* to become good; but as a (*p*) learned Author hath well observed, "Though this be the most probable, and only Method of Reconciliation that Nature suggests, yet whether this alone will be sufficient — we cannot be satisfactorily assured [by the Light of Nature] For it cannot be proved from any of God's Attributes, that he is absolutely obliged to pardon all Creatures all their Sins barely and immediately upon their Repentance." Repentance therefore intitling us to Forgiveness no otherwise, than as it is a Condition upon which God through Christ has graciously promised to forgive us; the Question will be whether the Gospel promises this to all penitent Sinners without Exception, *i. e.* whether Repentance be the only Condition upon which the Gospel promises Forgiveness. And that it is not, is clear; for

3. THE Gospel every where speaks of Faith in Christ, as one Condition necessary to qualify Men for the Remission of Sins. *Through his Name* (says St. Peter) *WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH in him shall receive Remission of Sins*, Act. 10. 43. And St. Paul speaking to the Jews concerning Christ, says; *Through this Man is preached unto you Forgiveness of Sins, and by him ALL THAT BELIEVE are justi-*

(*p*) Dr. Clark. Evid. of Nat. and Rev. Rel. Prop. 6.

fied, Act. 13. 38, 39. Again Rom. 3. 25, 26. *God hath set forth* (Jesus Christ) *to be a Propitiation, THROUGH FAITH in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the REMISSION of Sins that are past——that he might be just, and the Justifier OF HIM WHICH BELIEVETH in Jesus.*

THESE three Propositions being granted, the Argument is plain and undeniable. None have a Title to the Reward of Eternal Life, but those to whom Remission of Sin is promised. Remission of Sin is promised to Believers only; therefore Believers only have a Title to the Reward of Eternal Life: But I need not deduce this Point by way of Consequence; for

4. THE Gospel every where expressly speaks of Faith in Christ, as a Condition upon which only the Reward of Eternal Life is promised. *God gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH in him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life*, John 3. 16. *HE THAT BELIEVETH in me hath Everlasting Life*, Chap. 6. 47.

MANY other Texts might easily have been produced, in which Remission of Sins and Eternal Life, are annexed to Faith in Christ; but these Texts being readily to be found, I thought it sufficient to mention only a few of them. Now to all this I expect it will be objected, that these, and all other Places of the like Sort, where Remission of Sins and Eternal Life are promised upon Condition of Faith, relate only to those to whom the Gospel is made known, and who are capable of receiving it; that therefore those to whom the Gospel has not been made known, are not hereby excluded from a Right to those Privileges; because a Promise of a Benefit to some upon certain Conditions, does not hinder but that others may also be intitled to it upon other Conditions. Now to this I answer; That barely to promise Remission of Sins and Eternal Life to those who believe the Gospel, does not indeed hinder but that they may be also promised to others, and consequently does not destroy the Claim of others. But if the Gospel every where promises these Benefits upon Condition of Faith, *i. e.* if it no where promises them upon any other Condition (which is what I maintain) this in the very Nature of the thing, must needs destroy the Claim of all those who want that Condition, because (as has been shewn) all Claim to these Benefits depends solely upon Promise. The few Texts which I have already set down as a Specimen of the whole, are at least a sufficient Proof that Remission of Sins, and Eternal Life, are promised to those who believe the Gospel; if there are any in which they are promised to those who believe it not, it lies upon my Adversaries to produce them; and did I consult my own Ease more than the Reader's Satisfaction, I should leave upon them this reasonable Burden. But forasmuch as little has hitherto been offered on that Side, besides general References, and bare Assertions (a sure Preface that little also is to be expected) I shall be content to take upon my self the Proof of the Negative. As to the Remission of Sin, I have nothing to say particularly about it; and the Reason is, because I know not of one single Place in the whole Gospel, which carries so much as an Appearance of a Promise of it to any but Believers: But this needs not be distinctly spoken to. The main Question, and that to which the other is only subordinate, is, Whether the Gospel promises the Reward of Eternal Life on the Behalf of any who believe not the Gospel. If it can be shewn that it does, it is enough; if it cannot, all else that can be said will be too little. Two Things then I purpose to do towards the clearing up this Point, *viz.* First, To examine those Passages in the New Testament, which either do contain, or seem to contain, a Promise of Eternal Life to all good Men, and to shew that they imply nothing in Favour of Unbelievers. Secondly, To produce some other Passages, which do not only contain a Promise of Eternal Life to Believers, but confine or limit that Promise to them peculiarly. By either of these Methods the Controversy

will, I think, be sufficiently determined; but by bringing both Arguments mutually to support and strengthen each other, it will be determined more satisfactorily. It is enough to secure my Point, if it can be shewn, that those Texts which seem most likely to prove, that the Reward of Eternal Life does of Right belong even to some of those who believe not in Christ, do admit of another Interpretation. But it will be more secure still, if another Interpretation can be shewn to be necessary, which must needs be the Case, if the Gospel has any where confined the Promise of Eternal Life to Believers only.

CHAP. III.

Wherein some Passages in the New Testament, which either do contain, or seem to contain a Promise of Eternal Life to all good Men, are examined, and shewn to imply nothing in Favour of Unbelievers.

I AM first to examine those Passages in the New Testament, which either do contain, or seem to contain a Promise of Eternal Life to all good Men. Amongst which occur those remarkable Words of St. Peter, Act. 10. 34, 35. *Of a truth I perceive that God is no Respector of Persons: but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him.* This Text I have often heard appealed to, as very much favouring the modern Doctrine of Sincerity; but that the Reader may judge of the true Sense and Meaning of the Words, it will be necessary to lay before him the Occasion upon which they were spoken, which was as follows.

THERE was at Cæsarea a certain Man named Cornelius, a Centurion, who was a devout Man, and one that feared God with all his House; who gave much Alms to the People, and prayed to God alway. (Ver. 1, 2.) This Cornelius, as he was one Day at his religious Exercise, saw in a Vision an Angel of God coming in to him, and saying, Cornelius, Thy Prayers and thine Alms are come up for a Memorial before God. And now send Men to Joppa, and call for one Simon whose Surname is Peter; he lodgeth with one Simon a Tanner, whose House is by the Sea-Side, he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. (Ver. 3, 4, 5, 6.) The Angel having delivered this Message, was no sooner gone, than Cornelius prepares to put his Orders in Execution. He forthwith calls two of his Household Servants, and a devout Soldier of them which waited on him continually, and sends them to Joppa. (Ver. 7, 8.) On the next Day as they went on their Journey, and drew nigh to the City, about the sixth Hour, St. Peter being very hungry, would have eaten; but while they made ready, he fell into a Trance, and saw Heaven opened, and a certain Vessel descending unto him as it had been a great Sheet knit at the four Corners, and let down to the Earth, wherein were all manner of fourfooted Beasts, and wild Beasts, and creeping things, &c. And there came a Voice to him, saying, Rise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so Lord, for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the Voice spake unto him again the second time, saying, What God hath cleansed, call not thou common. This was done thrice, and the Vessel again received up into Heaven. (Ver. 9.—16.) Now whilst Peter was doubting with himself what this Vision should mean, the Men which were sent from Cornelius had made Inquiry for Simon's House, and stood before the Gate. Of this St. Peter had immediate Notice from the Holy Ghost, who assured him that he had sent them, and commanded him to go down, and go with them, nothing doubting. St. Peter obeys; and having received their Message, and lodged them that Night, he sets out with them the next Day for Cæsarea. (Ver. 17.—23.) The Day following they entred the City, and came to Cornelius's House, where several of his Friends

Friends and Acquaintance were met together in Expectation of him. St. Peter demanding the Reason why he was sent for, *Cornelius* relates to him the whole Story from the Beginning: Whereupon *Peter* opened his Mouth and said, *Of a truth I perceive that God is no Respector of Persons, but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him.* (Ver. 24, — 36.)

THE Fact being thus truly represented, the first Observation which offers it self is, That this *Cornelius*, though a Gentile, was *accepted of God*. This appears not only from hence, that his Case was that which gave Occasion to these Words of St. Peter, but also from the Character given of him, *Ver. 2.* For he was *a devout Man, and one that feared God*. But the Questions will be, when, in what Sense, and upon what Account he was accepted; which Points when rightly settled, will determine not only his Case, but the Case of all others under the like Circumstances. Those who argue from hence in Favour of Sincerity, must and do suppose, that these Words amount to a Declaration that *Cornelius* was then, even whilst a Gentile, accepted, *i. e.* admitted to a State of Salvation, in vertue, or on the Account of his Righteousness. Now I shall not stay to inquire whether this Righteousness was mere Sincerity, or whether it implied something besides Sincerity; because whatever you suppose is meant by it, 'tis plain that he was not intitled to Salvation in vertue of this Righteousness. This I say is plain from hence, that notwithstanding this Righteousness, he was commanded to apply himself to St. Peter to be instructed by him in the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, which is expressly declared to be that by which he must obtain Salvation. For thus the Apostle in the next Chapter rehearseth the Message of the Angel to *Cornelius*; *Send Men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose Surname is Peter, who shall tell thee Words WHEREBY THOU and all thy House SHALL BE SAVED, Acts. 11. 13, 14.* Had *Cornelius* been already in a State of Salvation, in vertue of his Righteousness, it would have been absurd to have sent him to the Gospel in order to obtain Salvation. Before his coming to St. Peter therefore he was not in a State of Salvation, *i. e.* he was not intitled to Eternal Life, for Salvation and Eternal Life in the Scripture Language signify one and the same thing. But how then, you'll ask, was he accepted? Why two things may be said in answer to this Question, *viz.* 1. That Acceptance may here signify no more than Approbation; and certain it is, that every righteous Man is approved of God so far as he is righteous. Now if *Cornelius* was approved of God on the account of his Righteousness; if nevertheless he was not presently admitted to a State of Salvation, but sent to the Gospel as the Means by which he must be admitted to a State of Salvation (which was manifestly the Case) this confirms what I say, and what the Learned *Grotius* has observed hereupon, *viz.* That (*q*) *after the Coming of Christ, God would admit of no other way of obtaining Salvation, than by the Knowledge of him.* But 2. That which I take to be the true and proper Sense of the Place, and which equally suits with my Purpose, is this, *viz.* That *Cornelius* (together with all others under the like Circumstances) was accepted or admitted to those Terms or Conditions of Salvation, which were now offered by the preaching of the Gospel. For the Words have a plain reference to the whole Story going before, and particularly to the Vision of the Sheet; of the Meaning of which, though (as you have seen) the Apostle for some time doubted, yet at the last he drew these two Inferences from it, *viz.* 1. That it was lawful for the Jews to converse familiarly with the Gentiles. And 2. That Salvation was now offered to both upon the same Terms. The first of these Particulars you meet with *Ver. 28.* where the Apostle speaks to *Cornelius*, and his Friends, in these Words; *Ye know that it is (i. e. it hath been esteemed) an unlawful thing for a Man that is a Jew, to keep Company or come unto one of another Nation. But*

(q) Post missum Christum noluit Deus aliam esse viam ad salutem quam per ejus Cognitionem.

God hath shewed me that I should not call any Man common or unclean. The Second you have in the Words now under Consideration, Of a truth I perceive that God is no Respector of Persons; but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him. For this is just as if he had said, "From all this which hath happened in the present Case; that is to say, from hence, that this Man, though a Gentile, hath been warned of the Spirit to send for me to preach to him the Gospel; and from hence also, that I, being a Jew, was commanded by the same Spirit to attend upon him in Company of these his Messengers, *μὴδὲν Ἀγχινοόμενον*, nothing doubting, or (as the Words may be render'd) making no Difference between my self and them, on account of the external Performances of the Law: From all this, I say, I am fully satisfied that the Salvation offer'd to Mankind by Jesus Christ, belongs to all without Exception. That God is no Respector of Persons, i. e. that he hath no Regard to the Jew above the Gentile, but that in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, i. e. all true Penitents, shall be accepted, or admitted to that Method of obtaining Salvation which the Gospel proposes." The whole Discourse seems to have been directly levelled against that common Mistake, That the Benefits of the Gospel belonged to none but those who would first of all submit to be circumcised, and keep the Law. That such an Opinion at that time prevailed among the Jewish Converts, we learn from Ver. 45. of this Chapter, where we read that *they of the Circumcision which believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the Gift of the Holy Ghost*. Nor was this the Error of common Christians only, but even of the Apostles themselves; for at Chap. 11. ver. 1. 18. we find the *Apostles and Brethren at Jerusalem* expressing much Wonder as well as Joy at this, *That God had granted to the Gentiles also Repentance unto Life*. All this manifestly shews it to have been universally the Opinion of those Times, that *Judaism* was a Qualification necessary to prepare Men for an Admittance into the Gospel Covenant. But St. Peter was now taught another Lesson, and had now also a very fit opportunity to declare it, even That the Covenant of Mercy by Christ was open to all who were desirous to be admitted into it; and that *the Gentiles should be Fellow-Heirs, and of the same Body* (with the Jews) *and partakers of the Promise of God in Christ by the Gospel*, as St. Paul has it, Eph. 3. 6.

I AM persuaded there is no impartial Reader who will not allow this Interpretation to be natural, and entirely agreeable to the Circumstances of the Place. This Text therefore strongly confirming, instead of overthrowing my Opinion, I proceed to the 2d Chapter to the Romans. God will render to every Man according to his Deeds. To them who by patient continuance in Well doing, seek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, Eternal Life; but unto them that are Contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish upon every Soul of Man that doth Evil, of the Jew first and also of the Gentile; but Glory, Honour and Peace to every Man that worketh Good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. For there is no Respect of Persons with God. For as many as have Sinned without Law, shall Perish without Law; and as many as have Sinned in the Law, shall be Judged by the Law. For not the Hearers of the Law are just before God, but the Doers of the Law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the things contained in the Law, these having not the Law are a Law unto themselves; which shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience bearing witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another. In the Day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel. Rom. 2. 6, to 17. Whether any thing can be concluded from hence in favour of mere Sincerity, needs not particularly to be enquired into. The Point now before me, is, whether the Gospel promises Eternal Life to Unbelievers, upon any Terms, even on Condition of their Obedience to the Law of Nature; and therefore at present I shall consider the Words under that

View

View only. The Place looks this way I confess, and has such difficulties, that I do not wonder that scarce two Expositors agree exactly in the Interpretation of it. I shall lay before the Reader what (so far as I am able to gather from the Scope and Connexion of the Apostle's Discourse) appears to me to be his true Meaning, and leave him to judge of it according to his Discretion.

THE main Design of the Apostle in the former part of this Epistle, was to establish the Doctrine of Justification by Faith. The general Proposition is laid down, Chap. 1. ver. 16. *The Gospel — is the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* This he supports by observing in the next Verses, That God's Method of Salvation through Faith is revealed in it, as his Wrath is also against all Ungodliness of Men. *Therein* (says he) *the Righteousness* (or † Justification) *of God ἐν πίστεως, by or through Faith, is revealed εἰς πίστιν, to Faith, i. e. either to beget Faith, or else (by an usual transmutation of the Participle into a Substantive) εἰς τὴν πιστεύουσαν, towards them that believe.* (Ver. 17.) On the other Hand, *The wrath of God is [therein also] revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men ἧ ἡ ἀλήθειαν ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κατεχόντων, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness, or (as the Words may be render'd) who through Unrighteousness hinder, or suppress the Truth.* (Ver. 18.) This being premised, he in the next place undertakes to shew both to Jew and Gentile, that they were all guilty before God. He begins first of all with the Gentiles, whom he taxes with gross violations of the Law of Nature, *Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations — changing the Glory of the uncorruptible God, into an Image made like unto corruptible Man, and to Birds, and fourfooted Beasts, and creeping Things.* This saith the Apostle they did even when they knew God; for that which may be known of God, was manifest in them, God having shewed it unto them [by the Light of Nature.] *For the invisible Things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead; upon which account he pronounces them all ἀναπολογήτους, without excuse.* (Vers. 19, to 24.) The remaining part of this Chapter being spent in illustrating this Point, by an enumeration of those Sins which the Gentile World had brought themselves under, he, in the next, opens the way to a Charge of the like Nature against the Jews, who were ready enough to condemn the Heathen, not seeing that their Sentence reached themselves. *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O Man, whosoever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy self; for thou that judgest dost the same things.* (Chap. 2. ver. 1.) Here then you see that both Jew and Gentile, are all of them included under Sin; which Point (after some incidental things said) the Apostle again resumes Chap. 3. ver. 9. where referring back to the two preceding Chapters, he saith, *We have proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under Sin, as it is written, There is none Righteous, no not one, &c.* This is pursued to Ver. 19. where he concludes with this general Inference, that *all the World was become ὑπὸ δίκῃς τοῦ Θεοῦ, under Condemnation before God.* Therefore (says he, Ver. 20.) *by the deeds of the Law there shall no Flesh be justified in his sight; for by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin, i. e. the Law only convicts us of Sin, and therefore to plead from hence, is only pleading against our selves. But how then are we justified? Why (says the Apostle) no otherwise than by the free Grace of God, who through Faith in Jesus Christ mercifully grants us a Remission of those Sins, from which the Law has provided no Redemption: For thus he concludes the whole Argument. But now the Righteousness, or Justification of God without the Law, i. e. exclusive of any thing that can be claimed by the Works of the Law, is manifest-*

† St. Paul frequently uses the Word δικαιοσύνη for δικαίωσις. Thus Rom. 6. 16. of Sin εἰς ὑπακοήν, of Obedience εἰς δικαιοσύνην where δικαιοσύνη is opposed to ὑπακοή. So Gal. 3. 21. If there had been a Law given, which could have given Life, verily Righteousness (ἡ δικαιοσύνη, i. e. Justification) should have been by the Law.

ed, or declared by the Gospel, which is witnessed also by the Law and the Prophets, even the Righteousness of God, which is by Faith in Jesus Christ unto all that believe — being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness, for or by the Remission of Sins that are past. And this he again inculcates is equally the Case of all. For there is no difference. All have Sinned, and come short of the Glory of God, and therefore it is by the free Grace of God that all who are justified, must be justified. And thus shall every Man be justified, who believes in Christ, whether he be Jew or Gentile. For is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. It is, therefore, One God who shall justify the Circumcision by Faith, and the Uncircumcision through Faith. Ver. 21, to the end of the Chapter.

THIS is the Substance of the Apostle's Argument, which as it was very proper to convince both Jew and Gentile of the necessity of coming to Christ for Justification, so it was more peculiarly so with respect to the Jews, who trusting to their own Law, *i. e.* to the Ceremonial Law as to the one thing Necessary, were under an Apprehension that they stood in no need of any help from the Gospel. That they were Sinners as well as the Gentiles, they could not deny; but then they thought that a strict and punctual Observance of the Externals of the Law would atone for the breach of the Morality of it; on which account they lookt upon themselves as justified, though in Truth they were (in this respect) in the very same Condition with the Heathen whom they condemned. To convince them of this, and to shew them how little Advantage was to be reaped from that upon which they placed so much Confidence, seems to have been the principal aim of the Apostle throughout the whole 2d. Chapter. *And thinkest thou this, O Man, that judgest them which do such things, and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the Judgment of God? If thou dost not, what else dost thou do but despise the Riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long suffering, not knowing, i. e. not considering that this goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance; and after thy Hardness and impenitent Heart treasurest up unto thy Self wrath against the Day of wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God? Who will render to every Man according to his Deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well doing, (i. e. in the Faith and Obedience of the Gospel) seek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, Eternal Life; but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish upon every Soul of Man that doth Evil. (Ver. 3, to 10.)* But if ye expect (as ye seem to do) any Security, or Exemption by your Law; I tell you that Jew and Gentile will be dealt with both alike. *For there is no Respect of Persons with God. (Ver. 11.)* That all of you are Sinners I have before shewn you; and whether it be with the Law, or without Law, it is the same thing. *For as many as have Sinned without the Law, shall also Perish without the Law, and as many as have Sinned in the Law, shall be judged, or condemned by the Law. (Ver. 12.)* Your wickedness certainly is not the less for your having a plain and express Law to direct you. *For not the Hearers of the Law are just before God, but the Doers of the Law shall be justified. (Ver. 13.)* In Truth both Jew and Gentile were under one and the same Law, the Light of Nature reaching the Gentiles the very same Righteousness, which the Jews were taught by the Law of Moses. *For (says the Apostle) when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the things contained in the Law, these having not the Law are a (or rather the) Law unto themselves; which shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Consciences also bearing Witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another. (Verf. 14, 15.)* By which Words St. Paul did not mean to assert, that the Gentiles had any of them fulfilled the Moral Law; (for this had been contradicting what he had asserted over and over, *viz.* That all had Sinned.) But the meaning is, That all the Moral Duties of the Law were understood, and practised among the Gentiles, as indeed they were, though there was

was no particular Person who had not transgressed in several Instances. So that there was plainly one and the same Law of judging both Jew and Gentile; and therefore (as was said in the beginning of the Chapter) the Jews by condemning the Gentiles, condemned themselves. As to the Ritual part of the Law, this being so far from disannulling the Moral, that it was commanded only for the Sake of the Moral, of it self it could be of no worth, and consequently could make no difference in this Case. This is what the Apostle shews in the conclusion of this Discourse, which bearing no part in the present Controversy, needs not to be insisted upon.

THE Apostle's Discourse then contains in it the following Particulars, *viz.*
 1. A Description of the sinful Estate both of Jew and Gentile. 2. A Consequence drawn from hence against both, *viz.* That they were equally obnoxious to the Wrath of God. 3. A Proposal of the Gospel to both, as the Method of Reconciliation. 4. An Enforcement of this, by the Promise of Eternal Life to those who should accept, and the Threatning of Eternal Damnation to those who should reject it. As to those who believed not the Gospel (of what sort soever they might be) he doth not propose Salvation to them upon any Terms: Not on Condition of perfect Obedience to the Law of Nature; for this had been vain. Such Obedience he declares there was none, all having transgressed the Law of Nature. Not on Condition of an imperfect, or (if I may so speak) a penitential Obedience to the Law of Nature; for he sets forth Faith in Christ, as that only by which Remission of Sin was to be obtained; and consequently, as that without which they could not be intitled to Eternal Life by their future Behaviour. If it be said that the Apostle has set forth Faith in Christ, as necessary to those only to whom the Gospel has been made known; I grant it so far as to acknowledge, that he doth not either expressly, or in arguing deny, but that God may possibly (through Christ) accept of the Repentance of a Heathen, to whom the Gospel never came, in as full and effectual a manner, as he does the Repentance of a Christian. But the Question is, Whether here he asserts that he will; and this, I say, he does not. He was arguing with those to whom the Gospel had been proposed; upon these he presseth the Necessity of Faith in Christ; not concerning himself at all (as indeed he had no Occasion to concern himself) with the Case of those to whom the Gospel had not been proposed, any farther than as they are included under his general Assertion, in which all of them are declared to be Sinners, and therefore (without the merciful Forgiveness of God) all under Condemnation. As to the Apostle's Declaration, that *God will render to every Man according to his Deeds; to them who by patient Continuance in Well-doing seek for Glory, &c.* this, (which I suppose will chiefly be insisted upon) you see, will admit of a Sense entirely agreeable to this Notion, *i. e.* it may be interpreted as containing only a Declaration, that those who embrace the Gospel when propounded, shall be rewarded with Eternal Life, and those who reject it, be punished with Eternal Damnation. And the very Words themselves seem to carry us to this Interpretation. For 1. The Reward is promised to those *who patiently continue in Well-doing*, or (as it is in the Greek) *in the good Work* (*καθ' ἡσυχίαν ἔργα ἀγαθὰ*) which seems to denote (*r*) some particular good Work, eminently and emphatically so. Now the Faith of the Gospel is by our Saviour emphatically stiled *ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ*, the *Work of God*; (John 6. 29.) and by St. Paul *ἔργον ἀγαθόν*, the *good Work*, (Phil. 1. 6.) The preaching of it is also called by way of Eminency, *the Work*, (Aët. 15. 38.) *the Work of Christ*, (Phil. 2. 30.) *the Work of the Lord*. (1 Cor. 16. 10.) Again 2. The Reward is promised to those *who seek for Immortality*: The Original has it *τοῖς ἀφθαρσίαν ζητοῦσι*, *to them who seek for Incorruption*; which seems to have a plain Reference to the Resurrection of the Body, of which the Light of Nature gave

(*r*) See Dr. Whitby on the Place.

no Hope or Expectation. And as the Reward promised is expressed by such Terms as seem to limit it to those to whom the Gospel was preached, so also is the Threatning: For 3. The Threatning is denounced τοῖς ἐξ ἐριθείας καὶ ἀπειθοῦσι τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, *to them who are of Contention, and obey not the Truth.* Now the οἱ ἐξ ἐριθείας, seem to have been those Disputers of the Age, who opposed the Preachers of the Gospel; which will still be more likely, if it be consider'd that ἡ ἀλήθεια, *the Truth*, is a Word by which *the Gospel* is frequently distinguished in Scripture. Thus 2 John 1. 2. the Gospel is stiled simply *the Truth*. And Coloss. 1. 5. *the Word of Truth*. The Knowledge of it is also called *the Knowledge of the Truth*. 1 Tim. 4. 3. The Belief of it, *the Belief of the Truth*. 2 Thess. 2. 13. Walking according to it, *walking according to the Truth*. 3 Joh. 3. 2 Joh. 4. Rejecting it, *not receiving or believing the Truth*. 2 Thess. 2. 10, 12. Erring from it, *erring or turning from the Truth*. Tit. 1. 14. Jam. 5. 19.

AND thus much for these Words of St. Paul. The next Passage I shall take notice of, is that of our Saviour, Joh. 5. 28, 29. *The Hour is coming, in the which all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice (i. e. the Voice of the Son of God, before spoken of) and shall come forth: They that have done good unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil unto the Resurrection of Damnation.* Here (it may be said) our Saviour declares that *all that are in the Graves, i. e. all that have died* shall be raised to Life again, in order to Judgment. That these are divided into two Sorts only, to wit, *the Good* and *the Evil*, to the former of which is promised *Life*, i. e. *Eternal Life*, and to the latter of which is threatned *Damnation*. Either therefore our Saviour has promised Eternal Life to some, even of those who believe not the Gospel, or else he has denounced Condemnation to all Unbelievers without Exception. But to suppose this is absurd, and therefore the other must be true. In this Argument you see there are two Things taken for granted, viz. 1. That our Saviour's Words do imply that the Resurrection of the Body shall extend to all the Dead universally. 2. That the Good and the Evil here spoken of, do comprehend or include the whole Number of those who shall be raised. As to the first of these Suppositions, I shall make no Objection against it, though I know it has been called in Question by some, and that not without some Appearance of Reason. 'Tis enough for my Purpose if it can be shewn that the second is founded upon no Necessity; for where the Force of an Argument depends upon two Suppositions, if you destroy one, 'tis the same thing as if you had destroyed both. I say then that there is no manner of Necessity to suppose that the Good and the Evil here spoken of, do comprehend the whole Number of those who shall be raised from the Dead. For our Saviour might very consistently declare the Will and Purpose of God, that all Men should be raised in order to Judgment, and yet not declare the Issue or Event of that Judgment, any farther than as it should concern those to whom he was sent to preach; and consequently by the Good and the Evil, he might mean no other than those who should be found such according to that Law, which he was then come to promulge to Mankind. This, I say, is consistent; and withal it is as much as the End and Purpose of his preaching necessarily required; for it was certainly enough for those to whom the Gospel was made known, to be informed what would be the Consequence of their embracing or rejecting it, without being acquainted after what manner God would deal with those who should not have the like Opportunity vouchsafed them. This then leaves room for a reasonable Presumption, that our Saviour intended not to meddle with the Case of such; and there is one Circumstance which seems to make it highly probable, viz. That wherever else he has given us an Account of the Proceedings at the great Day of Judgment, he has constantly represented the Subjects both of the Rewards and Punishments, as those to whom the Gospel had been made known. There is a remarkable Passage to this Purpose, Matt. 25. 31. & seq. where we are told, that *when the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he*

he sit upon the Throne of his Glory: and before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats; and he shall set the Sheep on his Right Hand, but the Goats on the Left. Observe here 1. That the Persons to be judged are spoken of in universal Terms; *All Nations shall be gathered together before him.* 2. Here is a Division made (seemingly) of the whole into two Sorts, to wit, *the Sheep*, which are afterwards called *the Righteous* (Ver. 37. 46.) and *the Goats* which represent *the Wicked*. In these two Circumstances then, there is an exact Resemblance between this Passage and the former; and now attend to the Conclusion. *Then shall the King say unto them on his Right Hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. For I was an hungred and ye gave me Meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me Drink, &c. Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the Left Hand, Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: For I was an hungred and ye gave me no Meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no Drink, &c. Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me, And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life Eternal.* You see here 1. That Eternal Life is given to the Righteous, even to all those who are spoken of as Inheritors of Christ's Kingdom, in Consideration of their having administred to the Necessities of the Brethren of Christ. Now the Brethren of Christ (Christ himself being his own Interpreter) are *those of his Disciples who hear the Word of God and do it.* Luk. 8. 21. Matt. 12. 49, 50. 2dly. Our Saviour speaks of these Acts of Mercy as done *to himself*, which implies that they were done for his Sake. For had they not been done for his Sake, though indeed he might have accepted them in the same manner as if they had been done to him, yet it could not with any Propriety of Speech be said that they were done unto him. He might have rewarded those who did them as merciful Men, but he could not reward them as being merciful to himself. 'Tis doing a thing with a special View and Regard to Christ, which makes the Benefit to become his. And accordingly the Reward which is promised to that Charity which is exercised towards Christ's Disciples, is expressly made to depend upon this Condition, That it be done *in the Name of Christ*, or *because they belong to Christ*, as you may observe, Mark 9. 41. But much more is a Regard (or rather a Disregard) to Christ necessary to make an Injury to become his; and those who do it, worthy of the same Treatment as if it had been done to himself. In dispensing our Favours we may sometimes exceed the Rule of Proportion; but in the Execution of Punishment we never ought. Mercy always inclines us to consider the bad Actions of Men under the most favourable Light; but Justice will never permit us to lay more upon them than they will bear. Now certain it is that every Injury receives an Aggravation from the Dignity of the Person to whom it is offered. 'Tis not so great a Crime to deny an Alms to a Common Beggar at my Door, as it is not to administer to the Necessities of my Friend and Benefactor. It deserves not the same Condemnation to be unmerciful to my Fellow Creature, as it does to shew no Compassion to my Lord and Saviour. And yet you see that at the great Day of Accounts, Christ will condemn the wicked as having been unmerciful to himself, because they were unmerciful to his Brethren; which will surely be a very hard way of proceeding, in reference to those who never had the Opportunity of knowing him, and consequently, who could not consider any of their Fellow Creatures, as standing in any relation towards him. Such Persons may indeed very justly be condemned because they were unmerciful, but they cannot be condemned under the particular Notion, and with the particular Aggravation of having been unmerciful to Jesus Christ.

LAY all these things together, and it will very plainly appear, that notwithstanding

standing our Saviour has here declared the Will and Purpose of Almighty God to bring all Men to Judgment, yet in describing to us the Issue and Event of that Judgment, he has considered the Subjects both of Reward and Punishment, as obeying, or not obeying his Gospel. The same Method is constantly observed wherever he speaks of the Day of Judgment under Parabolical Similitudes. At the 13th of St. *Matthew*, the *Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a Man, which sowed good Seed in his Field; but while Men slept, his Enemy came and sowed Tares among the Wheat, &c.* (Ver. 24, to 31.) The design of this Parable was to set forth the mixture of Good and Evil Men in the World, under the Preaching of the Gospel, and the different Fate of both when they should be discriminated at the Day of Judgment. For thus our Lord explains it. *He that soweth the good Seed is the Son of Man; the Field is the World; the good Seed are the Children of the Kingdom, but the Tares are the Children of the Wicked one. The Enemy that soweth them is the Devil; the Harvest is the End of the World; and the Reapers are the Angels. As therefore the Tares are gathered and burnt in the Fire: So shall it be in the End of this World. The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do Iniquity; and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of Teeth. Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.* (Ver. 37, to 43.) At Ver. 47. of the same Chapter, we have another Parable, where *The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a Net which was cast into the Sea, and gathered (Fishes) of every Kind; which when it was full, they drew to Shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into Vessels, but cast the bad away.* The casting of the Net, is plainly the Preaching of the Gospel, by which were gathered together different Sorts of Professors, some good some bad. Now as it was in the Parable that the good Fish were preserved, and the bad cast away, so (says our Lord) *shall it be at the End of the World. The Angels shall come forth, and sever the Wicked from among the Just, and shall cast them into the Furnace of Fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of Teeth.* Ver. 49, 50.

THESE which I have now mentioned are all the Places I can meet with, where our Saviour has given us a particular Account of the Process at the Day of Judgment, and in all of them you may see, that though the Just, the Righteous, and the Wicked are generally and indefinitely spoken of as the Subjects of Reward or Punishment, yet they are described by such Characters, and under such Circumstances as plainly shew, that they were considered by our Lord, either as Good, or Evil, Righteous or Unrighteous, according to the Gospel Rule. The Reader understands without doubt, that I do not mean to argue from hence, that none but those to whom the Preaching of the Gospel came, shall be either Rewarded or Punished in a future State; but only this, that our Saviour in his Promises of Eternal Life, and his Threatnings of Eternal Condemnation, concerned himself with none but such. That he has omitted, even when he had the fairest Opportunities of doing it, to state and determine the Case of others, as what would serve to no End or Purpose of his Mission, which was to reveal his Father's Will, and persuade those to whom that Revelation was, or should be made known, to receive it, and become Obedient thereto. Our Saviour indeed has somewhere toucht upon the State of the Patriarchs, and mentioned *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, as Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven: but this was not purposely insisted upon in the way of a direct Promise, but casually brought in as a thing already supposed, and taken for granted. *And I say unto you, that many shall come from the East, and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven: But the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer Darknes, &c.* Matt. 8. 11, 12. This Passage was not intended to set forth, or declare that *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* should sit down in the Kingdom of Heaven, but to shew the Jews (who were well enough satisfied of this) that they, notwithstanding their former Priviledges, should be excluded from an Inheritance with them, if now they rejected the

Proposals

Proposals of the Gospel, whilst the Gentiles upon their accepting them, should be received. So that upon the whole, I think we have a very plain Rule for interpreting the Words of our Saviour: *They that have done good, shall come forth to the Resurrection of Life, &c.* and all other places in the Gospel, where Eternal Life is promised in any such like general and Indefinite Terms. They are to be understood *οἰκονομικῶς*, not as if the Promise extended to all, who may in any Sense be termed good, but to those only, who are, or shall be such according to that Law or Rule of Behaviour which the Gospel prescribes to us.

BUT whether I am right, or whether I am wrong in this Notion, it is of no great Consequence to the Point in debate. For allowing that by the good, or Righteous, to whom Eternal Life is promised, our Saviour did mean all good Men that ever were before the Preaching of the Gospel, as well as all that ever should be afterwards; I say, allowing this to be the precise and proper meaning of these Words, it will not help our Adversaries, unless it could be proved that mere Heathens are of that Number. Now this I may venture to say, is impossible to be done: For let us consider what it is that denominates a Man good or Righteous. That perfect Obedience will be sufficient, there can be no Question; but such Obedience there is none, ALL having Sinned, as has been already shewn. An Imperfect Obedience cannot do it, without the Grace of God intervening, accepting us as Righteous, or (as St. Paul often speaks) *imputing Righteousness* to us. Whosoever therefore is good or Righteous, can only be imputatively so. Now since where Sin is imputed, Righteousness also cannot be imputed; it will follow that no Man can be termed good or Righteous, but in reference to some Law which admits of Repentance, or which provides for the Remission of Sin. Under such a Law were the Patriarchs of old, and all their Posterity (even the whole Jewish Race) in virtue of the Covenant made with them. Under such a Law are we now, in virtue of the same Covenant ratified anew, by the coming of him through whom it was at first made, only established upon other Conditions. But whether the Heathens, *i. e.* mere Heathens, are also under such a Law, is one main part of the Question in dispute; and consequently to argue that Eternal Life is promised to mere Heathens, because it is promised to all good or Righteous Men, is only to beg the very thing that is to be proved. Certain it is, that no Law admits of Repentance, or provides for the Remission of Sin, any otherwise than in virtue of the Promise of God; until therefore it can be shewn, that God has somewhere promised, or declared in Favour of mere Heathens, that he will accept of their Repentance in the same Sort that he will accept of the Repentance of a Christian, *i. e.* that their Sins against the Law of Nature shall be imputed to them no longer than they persist in those Sins; that how oft soever they may transgress, yet they shall be accepted, and esteemed as Righteous upon their future good Behaviour; until, I say, this can be very plainly made out, the general Promises of Eternal Life to all good Men, will be nothing to the Purpose. The utmost they can imply, is, that God will bestow Eternal Life upon all those in every Age, who have accepted, or shall accept of those Terms of Reconciliation (whatsoever they be) which have been, or shall be propounded by him: And concerning this, I make not the least doubt. But the Question still is, who are under Terms of Reconciliation with God. If mere Heathens be, let it be shewn that they are. But this must be shewn, not from the general Promises, but from the particular Declarations of the Gospel: And to these I am now ready more closely, and directly to appeal. Give me leave only to observe, that as the Promise of Eternal Life (in the utmost extent) can belong to those only, who shall accept the Terms of Reconciliation at any time propounded by God; so the Threatning of Eternal Damnation seems to belong to those only, who shall reject those Terms. For the Good and the Evil are opposed the one to the other, and it seems not reasonable, that those who

are not intitled to the Benefits of a Law, should be subject to the Penalties of it.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein some Texts of Scripture, which confine the Promise of Eternal Life to Believers, are produced.

I HAVE now examined the most principal of those Texts which either do contain, or seem to contain a Promise of Eternal Life to all good Men without exception; and endeavoured to shew that they imply nothing in favour of those, to whom the Gospel has not been revealed. And if the Account which I have given of the meaning of them be but barely probable, or indeed only possible (which I think cannot well be denied) my Point is sufficiently secured. But the Account will be not only probable, but even necessary, if it can be shewn that there are any plain Texts of Scripture which limit or confine the Promise of Eternal Life to Believers. For to suppose that the Scriptures have sometimes confin'd a Promise to Believers; and at other times extended the same Promise to Unbelievers also, is to make the Scriptures contradict themselves. But 'tis allowed on all Hands, that the Scriptures ought so to be explained, as to make them speak consistently with themselves; and no one I suppose is at a loss to know which of the two is the more reasonable Method, to interpret Particulars by Generals, or Generals by Particulars. Whether therefore the Scriptures have any where confined the Promise of Eternal Life peculiarly to Believers, (*i. e.* as you understand, I suppose, now under the Gospel Dispensation) is a very material Point to be considered; and that they have, is what my proposed Method next leads me to shew.

To this Purpose, I alledge in the first place the Words of our Saviour, *John* 14. 6. *I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no Man cometh to the Father, but by me.* By coming to the Father, our Lord means obtaining Eternal Life: *Pro eodem ponit vitam aeternam consequi, & ad Patrem venire, quia vita illa aeterna erit apud Patrem,* (saith Grotius.) And this is clear from the preceding Verses, where speaking to his Disciples, he saith, *In my Father's House are many Mansions* — *I go to prepare a place for you* — *Whither I go ye know, and the Way ye know.* Hereupon Thomas putting this Question to him, *Lord* — *how can we know the Way?* Jesus saith unto him, *I am the Way, i. e.* I am the Way to those Heavenly Mansions, which I now tell you of; and I am the only Way: For *no Man cometh, i. e.* can come unto the Father, but by me. The only Point now is, in what Sense our Saviour calls himself, *the Way to Eternal Life.* Some Interpreters suppose, that when he says, *No Man cometh to the Father, but by me;* his meaning is, that no Man cometh to the Father, but by the Merits of my Death. But others more truly understand it thus; no Man cometh to the Father, but by Faith in me, *i. e.* by embracing, and following my Doctrines. The Merits of Christ's Death cannot in any Sense be stiled the Way to Eternal Life. They open the Way, if you will, but they are not the Way it self. For that is the Way to Eternal Life, by walking according to which we shall obtain Eternal Life: Now this cannot be affirmed of the Merits of Christ, but of the Doctrines of Christ, and therefore the Doctrines of Christ, and not the Merits of Christ, are the Way to Eternal Life. But I need not argue this Point; every one knows that it was no unusual thing with our Saviour to speak of himself, when his Doctrines only could be intended. Thus *Joh.* 8. 12. *I am the Light of the World, i. e.* my Doctrine is the Light of the World; *he that followeth me, i. e.* my Directions or Instructions,

structions, *shall not walk in Darkneſs*. In which Senſe alſo he ſpeaks, *Joh. 10. 9. I am the Door, by me if any Man enter in, he ſhall be ſaved*. And the Method of Religion, which is taught by the Goſpel, or (which is all one) the Doctrines of Chriſt, is peculiarly ſtilled *the Way*, (*Act. 19. 9, 23. Chap. 24. 14.*) *the Way of God*, (*Chap. 18. 26.*) and *the Way of Salvation*. (*Chap. 16. 17.*) This Text then manifeſtly excludes Unbelievers of all Sorts, from having any Right or Title to Eternal Life: For the leaſt that it can be ſuppoſed to imply is, That ordinarily, or according to the preſcribed Method of God, no Man can obtain Eternal Life, without believing in Chriſt, and following his Doctrines. But if God has preſcribed ſuch Conditions of Eternal Life, as that an Unbeliever may acquire a Right or Title to it, it will then be true, that according to the preſcribed Method of God, Eternal Life may be obtained without the Knowledge of Chriſt, and conſequently Chriſt will not be, what he has declared himſelf to be, the only Way to Eternal Life, for there will be other Ways of coming to the Father, than by him.

No leſs convincing are thoſe Words of the Apoſtle, *1 Joh. 5. 11, 12. And this is the Record, that God hath given to us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not Life*. The Argument is this, Eternal Life is in Jeſus Chriſt. He therefore that hath Jeſus Chriſt, hath Eternal Life, becauſe he hath him in whom is Eternal Life. But he that hath not Jeſus Chriſt, hath not Eternal Life, becauſe he hath not him in whom only is Eternal Life. Unleſs therefore Unbelievers can be ſaid to have Jeſus Chriſt, they are excluded. But Jeſus Chriſt can be had no otherwiſe than by Faith; therefore none but Believers have Eternal Life, *i. e.* none but ſuch have any Claim or Title to it.

BUT I proceed to *St. Paul*, who has alone ſufficiently determined this Controverſy. To perſue him through all his Diſcourſes concerning Juſtification, would be an endless Task. I ſhall therefore ſelect a few Paſſages only, which ſeem to be moſt plain and deciſive. Two Things then we learn from this Apoſtle, *viz.* 1. That the Promiſes of God through Chriſt (and conſequently the Promiſe of Eternal Life, which is one of them) belong to thoſe, and to thoſe only, who are the Children of God: And 2. That Faith in Jeſus Chriſt is neceſſary in order to our Sonſhip. As to the firſt of theſe, his Words need no Comment: *If a Son, then an Heir of God through Chriſt. Gal. 4. 7.* Again, *If Children, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Chriſt. Rom. 8. 17.* To be an Heir of God, is to be intitled to his Promiſes, and principally to thoſe Bleſſings in a Life to come, which he has promiſed in Chriſt Jeſus. This you ſee the Apoſtle founds upon our Sonſhip, and accordingly at *Rom. 8. 23.* He ſtilles *the Redemption of our Body, i. e.* the Reſurrection to Eternal Life and Glory; τὴν υἰοθεσίαν, *the Adoption, i. e.* the Uſe, Poſſeſſion, or Enjoyment of that which as Sons we are intitled to. Indeed that none but the Children of God are intitled to the Kingdom of God, is what common Senſe may ſufficiently inform us; for if it were otherwiſe, there would then be no difference at all between thoſe who are the Children of God, and thoſe who are not the Children of God, *i. e.* the very Notion of Sonſhip would entirely be deſtroyed. I ſay, of Sonſhip; for we cannot otherwiſe be the Sons of God in any peculiar Senſe, than as by his Grace and Favour we are intitled to ſuperior Priviledges. Now that Faith in Chriſt is neceſſary that we may become the Children of God, the Apoſtle alſo directly aſſerts, *Gal. 3. 26. Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Chriſt Jeſus, i. e.* by Faith and no otherwiſe, as is farther Evident from what he ſays, *Chap. 4. ver. 7. of the ſame Epistle; Wherefore thou art no more a Servant, but a Son. Thou art no more a Servant; which implies that once they were Servants, and not Sons. And when was that? why all the time that they were in a State of Heatheniſm. For thus he ſpeaks, Ver. 4. When the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son — to redeem them that were under the*

Law, i. e. to release them from the Bondage they were under by the Law of Moses, that we (together with them) might receive the Adoption of Sons.—Wherefore (adds he) thou art no more a Servant, but a Son. These Words cut off all pretence for Cavilling, and shew plainly that Faith in Christ is necessary to Sonship, not only with respect to those to whom the Gospel has been made known, but to those also to whom it has not. For if Men may be the Sons of God without Faith in Christ, it will follow that these Gentiles might have been the Sons of God, (and according to the Principles of those against whom I am arguing, some of them at least probably were the Sons of God) before the Gospel was preached to them. But the Apostle declares that the very End and Purpose, for which the Gospel was preached to them, was, that *they might receive the Adoption of Sons*, and in Effect, pronounces of them all without Exception, that before that time they were not in a State of Sonship, but in a State of Servitude. All this is agreeable to what is taught by St. John, Chap. 1. ver. 12. *As many as received him (i. e. Christ) to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, i. e. they thereby became the Sons of God.* Now if those who at first received Christ, became the Sons of God by receiving him, they could not have been the Sons of God immediately before. And yet it is certain that the generality at least of those who came in upon the first preaching of the Gospel, were of the honest disinterested part of Mankind; they were those who (like Cornelius) *feared God, and wrought Righteousness*; those who were not hardened against the Truth, either by superstitious Opinions, or the prevalency of their Fleshly Appetites, but were by a meek and teachable Disposition prepared to submit themselves to the Will of God. And this seems not obscurely intimated to us in the following Verse; *Which (meaning such as received Christ, and became the Sons of God) were born not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God.* A very convincing Argument that Moral Qualifications of any Sort, if they be alone, or without Faith in Christ, will not make us the Children of God, nor consequently the Inheritors of his Kingdom.—But to return to St. Paul. The Argument which he here insists upon, viz. That the Gentiles became the Sons of God in consequence of their Faith, and Heirs of the Promise in vertue of their Sonship, he had persued, Chap. 3. only in different Words. *To Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made, i. e. they were made to them, and to them only. (Ver. 16.)* Which Words do plainly confine the Children of God to the Seed of Abraham. Now if you look to Ver. 7. and 29. you will find the Seed of Abraham confined to Believers. *They which are of Faith, the same are the Children of Abraham. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise.*

THUS then stands the Case. None but the Children of God, the Seed of Abraham, are Heirs of the Promises. None but Believers are the Children of God, and the Seed of Abraham. Therefore none but Believers are Heirs of the Promises. And agreeably to this Reasoning, the Apostle has in exprefs Terms excluded all the Heathen, without exception, from having (whilst such) any Right or Title to the Inheritance promised by the Gospel. *Remember, says he, (speaking to the Ephesians) That ye being in time passed Gentiles in the Flesh, who are called Uncircumcision, by that which is called Circumcision in the Flesh, made by Hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the World.* Eph. 2. 11, 12. In these Words the Apostle distinctly affirms, 1. That the Gentiles before the preaching of the Gospel *were Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, i. e. they were not Members of the Jewish Community or Body Politick.* 2. That in consequence hereof they were *Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, i. e. they had no Share or Part in those Covenants: The Promises of God did in no wise belong or appertain unto them.* But now (proceeds he) *in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ. For he is our Peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken*

broken down the middle Wall of Partition between us, having abolished in his Flesh the Enmity, even the Law of Commandments, contained in Ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new Man, so making Peace, and that he might reconcile both unto God in one Body, by the Cross, having slain the Enmity thereby, &c. Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God. (Ver. 13, to 20.) The meaning of which Passage is this, that Christ having put an End to those Ordinances, by the Observance whereof the Jews were distinguished from all other People; the Gentiles who were before Strangers, were now by embracing the Gospel become incorporated with them into one Body, and consequently, intitled to the same Promises. For this (says he, Chap. 3. ver. 3, 6.) is the *Mystery which God made known to me by Revelation; That the Gentiles should be Fellow-Heirs, and of the same Body (with the Jews) and Partakers of his Promise in Christ by the Gospel, i. e. by receiving the Gospel.* Now what this Promise is, which by receiving the Gospel the Gentiles were made Partakers of, we learn expressly from *Act. 26. 17, 18.* where the same Apostle speaking of his being sent to the Gentiles, declares it to be for this End, *viz. That they might receive Forgiveness of Sins, and Inheritance among them which are sanctified, by Faith that is in Christ Jesus.*

THE Matter in short is this; the Jews before the Coming of Christ had a covenanted Right to all those Benefits of his Mediation which Christians are now intitled to, *i. e.* to Grace, and Pardon of Sin here, and Eternal Glory hereafter. This Right they had not in vertue of the Mosaick Law (for the Promises annexed to this were only Temporal) but in vertue of the Promise which God had made to their Forefathers; to *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, and their Seed after them. But though the Jews had not this Right in vertue of the Mosaick Law, yet the Observance of the Mosaick Law, when, and so long as it was imposed, was necessary towards the Preservation of this Right; for the Condition upon which only they could expect to reap the Benefits of this Promise, was in general most certainly this, *viz.* That they should obey God in whatsoever he commanded them; so that I say, when the Law of *Moses* was once enjoined, they could not be refractory against this, without forfeiting their Interest in that Covenant which God had established with their Forefathers. The Jews therefore, so long as they were under the Law, *i. e.* so long as the Law of *Moses* continued in Force, were, though Heirs, in a State of Bondage; and the Gentiles also were hereby, as by a Wall or Partition, separated both from them and from God, *i. e.* from his Covenants, in which none but the Jews had any Share. But when Christ the Substance came, these Shadows were done away, and instead of them one general Condition was laid down, by which both Jew and Gentile should be received, to wit, Faith in him. And thus *out of twain* was made *one new Man*, Jew and Gentile being both made one. All upon the same Foot; All Members of the same spiritual Common-wealth; All Sharers in the same Privileges.

THIS I take to be the Substance of the Apostle's Reasoning; from whence two Things are very evident, *viz.* 1. That before the Coming of Christ, mere Heathens were under no Terms of Reconciliation with God; the Promises of God being confined to the Jewish Nation only. 2. That in this Respect Christianity supplies the Place of Judaism, and consequently, that the Profession of the former is now as necessary to intitle Men to those Promises, as the Profession of the latter was heretofore. Here then I take my Leave of this Branch of the Controversy, as thinking it abundantly clear from what has been said, that according to the Terms laid down in the Gospel, no Unbeliever (and consequently no merely sincere Unbeliever) is in a State of Salvation. If any one should ask what is the State of those to whom the preaching of the Gospel never came, I shall freely confess my Ignorance in this Matter, as those who make the Inquiry ought to own their Impertinency. The Question is, upon

what Foot the Gospel has fixed our Claim to its Rewards. How the Case stands with those for whom the Gospel has made no Provision, is a Point which the Over-curious may pursue with a great many vain and fruitless Attempts, but which wise Men will always be careful not to meddle with. The Principles of Natural Religion (which no Divine Revelation can ever contradict) only oblige us to say thus much, *viz.* That there is a Future State reserved for them as well as for the rest of Mankind; in which God will deal by them in such a Manner, as becomes the wise, just, and righteous Governour of the World. But in what particular Way or Manner God will be pleased to do this, Natural Religion does not inform us; it directs us to no peculiar, determinate State of Happiness; and consequently, there can be no arguing on the Behalf of such for the Gospel Rewards merely from this Consideration. Since then this is a Point in which Natural Religion leaves us in the Dark, and Revealed Religion is wholly silent, it behoves us to be silent too, remembering always that *secret Things belong unto God, but those that are revealed to us and to our Children.*

I SHALL conclude this Point with the Determination of the late Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of *Sarum*, which I take to be very judicious. "A great Difference (says he, *Expos.* Art. 18.) is to be made between a foederal Certainty of Salvation, secured by the Promises of God, and of this New Covenant in Christ Jesus, and the Extent to which the Goodness and Mercy of God may go. None are in the foederal State of Salvation but Christians: To them is given the Covenant of Grace, and to them the Promises of God are made and offered; so that they have a Certainty of it upon their performing those Conditions that are put in the Promises. All others are out of this Promise, to whom the Tidings of it were never brought; but yet a great Difference must be made between them, and those who have been invited to this Covenant, and admitted to the outward Profession, and the common Privileges of it, and that yet have in effect rejected it. These are under such positive Denunciation of Wrath and Judgment, that there is no room left for any charitable Thoughts or Hopes concerning them: So that if any part of the Gospel is true, that must be also true, that they are under Condemnation, for having *loved Darknes more than Light*, when the Light shone upon them and visited them. But as for them whom God hath left in Darknes they are certainly out of the Covenant, out of those Promises and Declarations that are made in it. So that they have no foederal Right to be saved; neither can we affirm that they shall be saved. But on the other hand they are not under those positive Denunciations, because they were never made to them. Therefore since God has not declared that they shall be damned, no more ought we to take upon us to damn them." He proceeds and says,

"INSTEAD of stretching the Severity of Justice by an Inference, we may rather venture to stretch the Mercy of God, since that is the Attribute which of all others is the most magnificently spoken of in the Scriptures; so that we ought to think of it in the largest and most comprehensive manner. But (*N. B.*) indeed the most proper way is for us to stop where the Revelation of God stops, and not to be wise beyond what is written, but to leave the Secrets of God as Mysteries too far above us to examine or to sound their Depth. We do certainly know on what Terms we our selves shall be saved or damned, and we ought to be contented with that, and rather study to *work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, than to let our Minds run out into uncertain Speculations concerning the Measures and the Conditions of God's uncovenanted Mercies.

CHAP. V.

Upon what Conditions the Gospel hath promised Salvation, to those who believe the Gospel.

THE first Branch of the Controversy which relates to Unbelievers, being now determined; I proceed in the next Place to consider the Case of Believers, *i. e.* of those who having embraced Christ as their King and Law-giver, have received his Gospel as the Rule of their Religion. That the Gospel promiseth not Salvation to such absolutely, but upon certain Conditions, is agreed on both Sides; the Difference lies only in this, What those Conditions are. My Method in handling this Point, shall be first of all to lay down what I find in the Gospel concerning this Matter; and then to examine the Opinion of those who are for resolving all into the single Qualification of Sincerity.

IT must be considered then, that according to the Principles already established, Christianity it self intitles us to Salvation no otherwise than as it is a Covenant of Grace, *i. e.* no otherwise than as it is a merciful Dispensation of God, whereby our past Sins being forgiven us, we are admitted to Salvation upon our future good Behaviour. This Admittance of Sinners to Salvation upon their future good Behaviour, is that, and that only, which is properly the Christian Covenant: For that which constitutes the whole of every Covenant, is the Condition on the one hand, and the Promise or Stipulation on the other. Now our Admittance to Salvation upon our future good Behaviour, comprehends both these Particulars, and consequently must be that which constitutes the whole Nature or Essence of the Covenant of Grace.

THE Remission of past Sins, therefore, *i. e.* (for this is what I mean) of Sins committed before our Admittance into the Covenant of Grace, is properly no Part of the Covenant, but an Act of Mercy antecedent to it, and which the Covenant presupposeth. The Consequence of which is, that every one whose Sins are not forgiven him, is out of the Covenant, and consequently has no Right or Title to Eternal Salvation, which can be claimed only in vertue of the Covenant. Now there are two Things which the Gospel requires of all those who are converted to the Faith of Christ, as necessary to qualify them for the Remission of past Sins, *viz.* Repentance and Baptism. The former of these needs not now particularly to be insisted upon; an account of the latter you have, *Act. 22. 16.* where *Ananias* thus speaks to *St. Paul* (who from a Persecutor was now become a Professor of the Christian Faith) *And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy Sins.* And they are both mentioned together *Chap. 2. 38.* where the Jews having put this Question to *St. Peter* and the rest of the Apostles, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* Peter said unto them, *Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins.* So that hence it is plain, that ordinarily, or according to the Method of Salvation prescribed in the Gospel, Baptism, together with Faith and Repentance, is a coordinate Means necessary to qualify us for an Admittance into the Gospel Covenant; and agreeably hereto our Blessed Lord has expressly annexed the Promise of Eternal Life to those who are baptized, as well as to those who believe. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.* *Mark 16. 16.* And Again, *Joh. 3. 5.* *Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*

IT is the more necessary to insist upon this, because 'tis of late grown to be a Fashion with some among us, to set the Ordinance of Baptism as low as they can, and lower I am sure a great deal than in Reason they ought. The worthy

Mr. Pyle (s) cries out most powerfully against Zeal for Externals, and cautions me not to be *too much surprized* when he is going to represent the Christian Sacraments, as of the Number of those Things upon which our Lord never laid any considerable Stress. Nothing of this sort, from such an Author, comes to me unexpected; and therefore his Admonition might have been spared. But I confess it was not without some sort of Surprise, as well as Concern, that I found Mr. Burnet, my Lord of Bangor's more able, and, as it is to be hoped, more honest Advocate, pursuing (to say no worse of it) the indecent Work with so much Eagerness, as, rather than give to these Sacred Institutions their due Weight, to run himself into manifest Self-Contradictions. That Baptism (for this is the only Point I am now concerned with) is a positive, standing Ordinance of Christ, he (t) owns; and in consequence hereof declares, that (u) *to those who believe it to be such, it becomes necessary, in so much as all Obedience to Christ is necessary to the Salvation of Christians.* Yet at the same time he affirms universally, that (x) *It is one of those outward Actions which Christ never laid any stress upon, but as Signs of inward good Dispositions.* These two Things are utterly inconsistent: For to say that Christ lays no stress upon the outward Act of being baptized, but as it is a Sign of inward good Dispositions, implies, to my Understanding, that he regards or accepts it for no other Reason, than because it is a Sign, &c. But if Baptism be an Ordinance of Christ, as Mr. Burnet confesses, he must then accept or regard the Act of being baptized, as, or because it is, a Compliance with his own Institution, as well as because it is a Sign of inward good Dispositions. To speak properly indeed, 'tis absurd to say that God accepts or regards Baptism at all, because, or as, it is a Sign, for as to himself he wants no Sign, and therefore upon his own Account he cannot accept or regard any thing as such. And though Baptism was instituted to be a Sign unto Men, yet the Reason why God accepts the outward Act, is not because it is a Sign, but because it is an Act of Obedience to him, whose Will it is that such a Sign should be used. Furthermore; if God lays no Stress upon the Act of being baptized, but as it is a Sign of inward good Dispositions, it will follow that where those inward good Dispositions are, the outward Sign cannot be necessary; for that which is valued only upon the Account of something else, can be of no Value where that other thing is present. Mr. Burnet himself confesses as much: (y) *The Grace and Favour of God, says he, depend ALWAYS on the inward Disposition — AND NOT on the outward Sign of it, i. e. not at all on the outward Sign.* But if, as he allows, Baptism be an Ordinance of Christ; if to those who think it to be so, it is necessary to Salvation; 'tis plain then that the inward Disposition does not exclude the Necessity of the outward Act; and then it must be false to say, that the Favour of God always depends upon the inward Disposition, and not on the outward Sign of it, for it will sometimes at least depend upon both.

IN short; by Mr. Burnet's Way and Manner of explaining himself, one would be induced to think that he has the same, and no better Notion of the Christian Sacraments, than he has of those outward Tokens of Respect or Civility, which Men are wont to use one towards another. These, 'tis true, are regarded by us as Signs only, i. e. we value them no farther than as they express, or as we believe them to express, the inward Sentiments or Dispositions of those by whom they are used. But what is the Reason why we regard them? Why plainly, because we cannot look into the Heart, which if it were in our Power to do, these Signs would be perfectly useless, and deserve no Regard at all. To suppose therefore that God regards any thing merely as a Sign, what is it but to make him weak and defective even as our selves? What is it but

(s) Third Letter, p. 24.
p. 164.

(y) Ibid. p. 84.

(t) Second Letter to Mr. Lam.

(u) Ibid. p. 165.

(x) Ibid.

to take from it the Regard which may be due to it as an Institution of our Saviour, and consequently (in effect) to deny that it is his Institution? But this, I hope, is only a careless Thought, of which I shall make no farther Use than to observe, that when Men are under violent Inclinations to lessen the Value of any thing, 'tis an easy matter for them to overshoot themselves, and confound their own Reasonings. 'Tis the same Zeal (a Zeal contrary to that which Mr. Pyle complains of in me) even a Zeal against External, which, I presume, has given birth to the whole of that wretched Account of the Sacraments, which lies scatter'd up and down in Mr. Burnet's Book; concerning which I do not remember that he has said one Word either of Truth or Consistency. It is very fitting that I should take this Opportunity of supplying what is yet behind, that the Reader, having the entire Scheme before him, may see what strange things may sometimes be effected by the help of *able Hands*. Mr. Law had said (unfortunately it seems) that the Sacraments are Means of Grace, *i. e.* as he rightly explains it, Instruments of conveying Grace. Mr. Burnet confronts him in this, and says that (2) *strictly they are not Means of Grace*. The State of the Question between these two Disputants is very plain, and it remains upon Mr. Burnet to prove his Assertion; but instead of this the very next Page, and at about a dozen Lines distance, he very generously gives it up; for there a Sacrament is declared to be *a Mean* of Grace, only it is a *remote Mean* of Grace. Now this I would ask of this worthy Gentleman: Is not that which is the Instrument of doing any thing, though it be only remotely so, strictly an Instrument? If he says it is not, the Reason is wanting. If he says it is, he confesses what Mr. Law asserts, *viz.* That the Sacraments are Means of Grace. If the Reader (as possibly he may) should be curious to know what might be the Meaning of all this Puzzling, I will tell him. It was then to secure himself from the Imputation either of having forgotten, or of not paying a due Respect to, his Church Catechism, in which a Sacrament is positively defined to be *a Means of Grace*. A SACRAMENT (says our Church Catechism) is AN OUTWARD AND VISIBLE SIGN OF AN INWARD AND SPIRITUAL GRACE GIVEN UNTO US; ORDAINED BY CHRIST HIMSELF, AS A MEANS WHEREBY WE RECEIVE THE SAME, &c. The Catechism, you see, says as Mr. Law says, *viz.* That a Sacrament is *a Means of Grace*; and the part which Mr. Burnet now made it his Business to act, was to contradict the latter, and yet not to contradict the former. This you'll say is a very nice Point; but thus he solves the Difficulty. Our Church, says he—in defining a Sacrament, makes it—only a remote Mean of Grace, and not the immediate Mean or Cause of receiving it. By which the Reader is plainly desired to understand, that because our Church has made a Sacrament to be only a remote Means, therefore it has not made it to be strictly a Means, *i. e.* (in other Words) because our Church has made a Sacrament to be a Means, therefore it has made it to be no Means; for that what is a Means, is not strictly a Means, is a Mystery which Mr. Burnet alone is able to unfold. But allowing that there were any room for this subtle Distinction, there is one thing yet which lies upon this Gentleman to be accounted for; and that is, how he came to suppose that by a Means Mr. Law meant strictly or immediately a Means, and the Church Catechism only a Means remotely. That either the one or the other hath distinguished in this manner, I do not find, nor does Mr. Burnet so much as offer to shew it. Mr. Law says barely that a Sacrament is a Means of Grace; our Catechism uses the very same Words; by a Means both of them understand an Instrument whereby Grace is convey'd, but whether mediately or immediately, neither have affirmed. Where then I pray is the difference which Mr. Burnet insinuates? Why purely in his own Invention. Mr. Law's Intention without Question, was to teach that a Sacrament is an Instrument whereby Grace is immediately convey'd, and whe-

(2) *Ibid.*

ther Mr. *Burnet* will bear it; or not, our Church Catechism intended the same thing. This will appear very plain, by considering particularly the Sacrament of Baptism, which our Church (and very rightly) has made to be the immediate Instrument of conveying that Grace whereof it is said to be a Means. For what is that Grace? Our Catechism Answers, A DEATH UNTO SIN, AND A NEW BIRTH UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS. FOR BEING BY NATURE BORN IN SIN, AND THE CHILDREN OF WRATH, WE ARE HEREBY MADE THE CHILDREN OF GRACE: That is to say, the Grace whereof Baptism is the Means, or the Grace conferred by Baptism, is the putting us into a State of Righteousness, through the Forgiveness of our past Sins; so that whereas we were before, the Children of Wrath, *i. e.* obnoxious to the Wrath of God, we are hereby, *i. e.* by being baptized, made the Children of Grace, *i. e.* the Children of the Covenant of Grace. This then is the Grace conferred by Baptism, our past Sins are remitted, and we are taken into a Covenant of Mercy with God. The Question now is, whether Baptism be the immediate Instrument of conveying this Grace, or only a remote Instrument. And this Question methinks is easily resolved. For if Baptism be not the immediate Instrument of conveying this Grace, either Faith or Repentance must, because there are but these three Things required to qualify us for the Grace of Pardon, and our admittance into the Covenant of Mercy by Jesus Christ. But Faith and Repentance are both of them Qualifications previous to Baptism. For WHAT IS REQUIRED OF PERSONS TO BE BAPTIZED, *i. e.* to qualify them to be baptized? — I am ashamed to ask such Questions in a Dispute with a learned Man and a Divine: But the Answer is, REPENTANCE, WHEREBY THEY FORSAKE SIN; AND FAITH, WHEREBY THEY STEDFASTLY BELIEVE THE PROMISES OF GOD MADE TO THEM IN THAT SACRAMENT. If then Faith and Repentance be Qualifications previous to Baptism, it necessarily follows, that Baptism is the immediate Instrument of conveying that Grace, whereof it is a Means. For that is an immediate Instrument, which produces the Effect without the intervention of another Instrument. Now Faith and Repentance going before Baptism, cannot intervene between that and the Grace conveyed. Therefore Baptism is the immediate Instrument of conveying that Grace.

THIS is the plain truth of the Matter; and that Mr. *Burnet* himself is not able to make any thing else of it, will be visible to any one who observes what hard Shifts he has been put to, in endeavouring to bring down the Notion of Baptism to his own Scheme. For thus he attempts it, p. 85. *The Mean of Grace there (i. e. in Baptism) is the present pardon of past Sins, signified by the outward Sign of washing with Water; which immediately reinstates us in the Favour of God, and renders us in his Eyes as pure as if we had never Sinned, upon the outward Profession of believing in him, and Vow of obeying his Commands; which, if we observe it, and continue in that Profession and Belief, will continue us in that Favour of God, to which we are then restored. The outward Ceremony can no otherwise be stiled a Mean of Grace, than remotely, as far as it has these Effects following it.* In this whole Account (with leave be it spoken) there is scarce one Word of Sense. For pray attend to the Particulars. He says, 1. That in Baptism, *the Means of Grace is the present Pardon of past Sins*; which is plainly confounding the Means of Grace, with the Grace it self. For according to the Account just now given the Pardon of past Sins is the Grace, and Baptism is the Means of conveying that Grace. If Mr. *Burnet* does not like this Account, let him shew us if he can of what Grace the Pardon of past Sins is the Means. And you see he has done something towards it already. For according to him, the present Pardon of past Sins, is the Means of this Grace, *viz.* we are *reinstated in the Favour of God, and render'd as pure in his Eyes, as if we had never Sinned.* Which is just as if he had said, that the Grace whereof the Pardon of Sin is the Means, is the Pardon of Sin: For what I pray is the Pardon of Sin but this that God admits us into his Favour, esteeming us, though Sinners, as if we had not Sinned. In truth,

truth, the Pardon of Sin cannot on any account be stiled a Means of Grace; for when we speak of a Means of Grace, we speak of something performable by us, which procures Grace. Now the Pardon of Sin is not an Act of ours, but an Act of God, consequent upon certain Qualifications on our part: It is not therefore, nor can it be a Means of Grace. It is Grace it self. He says, 2. That *the present Pardon of past Sins, immediately reinstates us in the Favour of God—upon the outward Profession of believing in him* (Christ, I suppose, he would have said) and *Vow of obeying his Commands*; which Sentence destroys it self. For if the present Pardon of past Sins IMMEDIATELY reinstates us in the Favour of God, then nothing intervenes between that and the Favour of God. But to say that when our past Sins are Pardoned, we are reinstated in the Favour of God UPON the outward Profession of believing in Christ, &c. is to say, that this Profession intervenes; which Profession being made at our Baptism, this Passage therefore makes Baptism to be not a remote, but (according to Mr. Burnet's Account) the immediate Means of Grace. It contains also a farther Absurdity, viz. That our Sins are supposed to be Pardoned before we profess to believe in Christ, and vow to obey his Commands; which (in reality) makes Baptism no means of Grace at all. And this he confesseth, p. 143. where he says, that the *Inward Dispositions* are the ONLY Means of Grace. That God bestows Grace not BY MEANS of the Sacraments, but only AT THE SAME TIME that we are performing them, which again must be false (in reference to Baptism at least) if, as is here supposed, our Sins are pardoned before we profess to believe in Christ, and vow to obey his Commands. He proceeds, 3. Which (i. e. which Vow of obeying his Commands) if we observe it, and continue in that Profession and Belief, will continue us in that Favour of God to which we are then restored. That is to say, when once a Man's Sins are pardoned, and he is taken into God's Favour upon his Profession of believing in Christ, and Vow of obeying his Commands, if he takes care to keep that Vow and sin no more, that Favour shall be continued to him. That's much indeed! But 4. What follows is surprizing. *The outward Ceremony* (i. e. of Baptism, under which is comprehended the washing with Water, the Profession of believing in Christ, and the Vow of obeying his Commands; *This outward Ceremony*, says Mr. Burnet) *can no otherwise be stiled a Mean of Grace, than remotely, as far as it has these Effects following it.* Now you are to remember that the Grace (according to Mr. Burnet) is the Favour of God, rendring us as pure in his Eyes, as if we had not Sinned. The Effects which he speaks of, as what ought to follow the Ceremony of Baptism, are the continuance in the Belief of Christ, in the Profession of that Faith, and in the Obedience to his Commands. If then the outward Ceremony of Baptism be no otherwise a Means of Grace, than as it is followed by these Effects, then, until these Effects do actually follow, it is no Means of Grace, i. e. until these Effects follow, we do not become as pure in the Eyes of God, as if we had never sinned. And yet we are told in the very same Breath, as it were, that this Effect follows upon, i. e. immediately upon the outward Profession of believing in, and Vow of obeying his Commands! If now it be considered that the being as pure in the Eyes of God, as if we had not sinned, is the Pardon of our past Sins, it will follow, according to Mr. Burnet's Reasoning, that until we have fulfilled the Vow and Promise made at our Baptism, our past Sins, i. e. our Sins committed before Baptism, cannot be pardoned. How naturally does one Absurdity make way for Multitudes of others! That which Mr. Burnet might have said, is, That Baptism is no means of Grace, unless attended with Faith and Repentance. This is Sense and Truth. For Faith and Repentance, as I said before, are Qualifications necessary in order to Baptism, and therefore if either of these be wanting, Baptism will not procure us the Pardon of our past Sins, and consequently will not be a Means of Grace. But this doth not hinder but that when both these are present Baptism is a Means of Grace, yea, and an immediate Means of Grace. For that a thing may properly become a Means, it is not necessary that it should produce the Effect

singly; and an immediate Means, is so far from excluding, that it rather supposes other Means antecedent to it. My Pen is certainly the immediate Instrument, by which I now write; but it could be no Instrument at all, had I no Hand to move and direct it; and I therefore call it the immediate Instrument, to distinguish it from the other, which concurs also to the Effect, but more remotely.

You have now the whole of Mr. Burnet's Scheme; with which I had not now troubled the Reader, but that I thought it necessary to do Justice to an Institution of our Lord, and to our excellent Church Catechism, both which I think he hath very greatly injured. He owns Baptism to be an Institution of Christ (I presume) because he was forced to it, or rather (if one might judge of his Intentions by his manner of writing) the more effectually to expose it. For having thus given it the Divine Sanction, what else has he labour'd at, but to insinuate into his Readers the meanest Opinion of it he possibly could? As if our Saviour had appointed a Sacred Rite, not caring (in a manner) whether it were observed or not! Such an Undertaking as this would have deserved Contempt, had Mr. Burnet (as such Defenders of Christianity and Protestantism, sometimes Modestly have done) left the Cause to rest upon his own Authority. But when God and the Church are made Parties in the Dispute; when the Explications of our Faith are called in against the Scriptures, and the Scriptures against themselves; it ought surely to move the honest Indignation of every sober Christian. How just this Writer hath been to our Church, I have already shewn; the Reader shall next see in what Sort he has treated the Gospel. The Texts cited from thence, are indeed but Two (more I suppose could not have been mentioned without doing greater Honour to Baptism, than he was willing to bestow upon it,) but those Two he has corrupted with such artificial Turns, as indeed are frequent enough to be met with in the Books of Quakers, who deny it to be a Divine Institution, but which till now, I never saw in the Writings of any Divine of the Church of England, who owns it to be such, and whose Business it either is, or ought to be, to defend it in a manner suitable to such an acknowledgement. (a) "St. Peter it seems, entirely confirms his Notion of Baptism (1 Epist. 3. 21.) where he expressly lays our Salvation NOT on the outward Sign, BUT on the inward Disposition; Baptism doth also now Save us, not the putting away the filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God," &c. Thus Mr. Burnet: but St. Paul understood the Case better than he; and he lays our Salvation expressly upon the outward Sign and the inward Disposition both. Tit. 3. 5, 6. He saved us by the washing of Regeneration, AND renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Where the renewing of the Holy Ghost signifies that inward Change of Mind, which is wrought in us by the Operations of the Holy Ghost, which is here mentioned only as a coordinate means of Salvation, together with the washing of Regeneration, i. e. outward Baptism. St. Peter certainly meant no more than, that Baptism only, or Baptism alone does not save us, without the answer of a good Conscience; and this is certainly, and undoubtedly true. For as St. Paul argues, Rom. 6. 3, 4. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his Death? Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into Death, that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of Life. Our Baptism represents to us the engagement we then lay our selves under to die unto Sin, even as Christ died, and to rise again unto newness of Life, even as he was raised from the Dead; which engagement unless we answer, our Baptism will be in vain. How this does at all confirm Mr. Burnet's Notion, I confess I do not see; but his Comment

(a) Ibid. p. 85.

upon St. Peter's Words does very fully confirm me in the Notion I have of him, viz. That instead of giving to Baptism that weight which is due to it as an *Institution* of our Saviour, his chief aim is to render it contemptible. What else could induce him to imagine, that this Apostle should lay our Salvation not upon the outward Sign, but upon the inward Disposition, *i. e.* (for this he means, or he means nothing) not at all upon the former, but wholly upon the latter? Could St. Peter not lay our Salvation upon that which (as Mr. Burnet himself acknowledges) Christ has laid upon us as our Duty to do, and upon which the Scriptures have every where else laid our Salvation? Or could he not lay our Salvation upon that which he himself (as tis recorded, *Act. 2. 38.* before cited) insisted upon as necessary, in order to the Remission of Sin? What was he doing when he said to the Jews, *Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the Name of Jesus, &c.*? Was he prescribing an useless, insignificant Ceremony? — But I shall stay no longer to argue in so clear a Case. The other Text produced by him, is *Mark 16. 16.* A Passage strong enough of all reason, but which this Author endeavours to soften, by observing (b) "*What a plain difference our Saviour himself has placed between the Thing, and the Sign of it.*" Now the Difference is this, that "when he declares that *he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not* (he does not add, *he that is not baptized*, for fear of leading Men into fatal, and uncharitable Mistakes) *shall be damned.*" The fatal uncharitable Mistake, which Mr. Burnet here supposes our Saviour was guarding against, is (as he has told us a little before) that of condemning, *i. e.* pronouncing condemned, those who upon a Sincere, though Erroneous Persuasion neglect the performances of these Ceremonies, *i. e.* the observance of the Sacraments; an Uncharitableness, which to charge upon any of us, is of all others the most *Uncharitable*. What may be said, as to the Case of such, shall be considered afterwards: my present business is only to consider Mr. Burnet's Observation; which tending (as the former) to diminish from the weight of that Authority by which the Sacraments are enforced, tends therefore to extenuate the guilt of those who neglect them, even insincerely. But 'tis of no weight; For, 1. HE without doubt looks upon it as an uncharitable Mistake to determine such Persons to be out of the State of Salvation (*i. e.* not Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven) as well as to pronounce them condemned: and this indeed he has very plainly told us. *Far be it from me*, says he, — *to determine them*, (meaning those who sincerely neglect the Sacraments) — *to be out of the Favour of God, and the State of Salvation.* And yet our Saviour has determined in the Negative, that *except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* *Joh. 3. 5.* Does not this as strongly imply that no Person who is unbaptized, shall be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven, as the saying, *He that is not baptized, shall be damned*, would have implied that every unbaptized Person shall be damned? Surely it does! If then the Reason why our Saviour did not say, *he that is not baptized shall be damned*, was, that he might guard against an uncharitable Mistake, why did he not forbear to say, that *except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, to guard against that which (in Mr. Burnet's Opinion) is also a Mistake equally uncharitable? But the Truth is, that as this latter way of speaking does not imply absolutely, that none but those who have been baptized, shall be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven, but only that Baptism is the ordinary or prescribed Method of God under the Gospel, by which Men must be admitted to the Kingdom of Heaven; so neither does the latter way of speaking imply absolutely, that all shall be damned whose Chance it may be not to have been baptized. For though the Promises of God reach no farther than to the Conditions upon which they are made, yet Common Sense will certainly limit his Threatnings to wilful Dis-

(b) *Ibid.* p. 164.

obedience; it being absurd and contrary to all the Notions we have of God, to suppose that he should damn Men for not doing that which it never was in their Power to do; or for doing that which it never was in their Power to avoid. Wherefore 2. Mr. *Burnet's* Observation is impertinent upon this Account also, *viz.* That these Words of our Saviour, as they now stand, infer the very same Conclusion that, and no other than, they would have inferred, had he expressly annexed the Penalty of Damnation to the want of Baptism. For as they now stand, they imply thus much, that those who wilfully neglect to be baptized, are under Condemnation; and if he had said, *He that is not baptized shall be damned*, they would have implied no more. But to spoil Mr. *Burnet's* Observation all at once, and to take from him all Advantages of any sort which he may be disposed to draw from it, I say 3. That our Saviour has very frequently annexed the Penalty of Damnation to the want of Baptism. For to be baptized is confessedly one of the Commandments of Christ, and he has very frequently threatened Damnation to those who break any of his Commandments. Will Mr. *Burnet* now say, that our Saviour hath hereby done that which tends to lead Men into fatal and uncharitable Mistakes? If he will, he knows what Answer he will receive. But if not, let him not any longer pretend that the Reason why he annexed not that Penalty here, was for fear of leading Men into fatal and uncharitable Mistakes. You see plainly he was not afraid of it; and if he had been afraid of it, this would have been every whit as strong a Reason why he ought not to have threatened Damnation to the want of any other Qualification commanded by him, as well as that of being baptized. For 'tis equally uncharitable to affirm with respect to any of Christ's Commandments, that they who break them shall be damned; if they are broken not through a free and willing Choice, but through the most unaffected and unavoidable Ignorance.

THE true Reason then, why our Saviour in this particular Place annexed not the Penalty of Damnation to the want of Baptism, was because there was no need for him to it, and not, as Mr. *Burnet* pretends, because he intended to make any Difference between the Sign, *i. e.* his own Ordinance, and the Thing signified by it. But he can be as free, you see, with the Scriptures as with the Church, which you will yet be more fully convinced of, when I have shewn you, that he has treated the whole Gospel in general after the very same manner in which he has treated these two particular Passages. For thus he proceeds; *I dare the less do this (i. e. determine those who sincerely neglect the Sacraments, out of the State of Salvation) when I observe what plain Difference our Saviour himself has placed between the Thing and the Sign of it, &c.—and farther, when I consider how SMALL a WEIGHT is laid on these two Ceremonies of his own Institution, in the Gospel, IN COMPARISON of the GREAT WEIGHT which is there laid on Matters of quite another Nature.* What Weight would Mr. *Burnet* have? Does he not own the Sacraments to be Institutions of Christ? And can there be any greater Weight laid upon any thing, than the Sanction of the Divine Authority? That some things commanded in the Gospel, to wit, the moral Duties, (which I suppose are the *Matters of a quite another Nature*, which Mr. *Burnet* speaks of) are in themselves, or antecedently to any Divine Precept, of great Weight, is undoubtedly certain; which therefore in respect of those that are purely of a positive Nature, *i. e.* in themselves of no Weight at all, may very fitly be stiled in our Saviour's Phrase, *τὰ βαρύτερα τῷ νόμῳ*, the *WEIGHTIER Matters of the Law*. But to say that the GOSPEL LAYS small Weight upon Christ's own Institutions, in comparison of the great Weight which it lays upon Moral Duties, is to suppose that the Gospel has made a difference in the Manner of commanding both. That whilst it rigorously insists upon the Discharge of the former, it allows a Sort of Indulgence to the Neglect of the latter. It is an Opinion, I know, which but too commonly prevails, that if Men be but morally honest, 'tis of small Consequence whether they pay any Regard to positive Institutions or not. I am sorry Mr. *Burnet* has given so much Countenance

Countenance to this Mistake; though I am the less sorry, because he has given so little Reason for it. Could he have produced any Passages in Scripture, where we are told, or from whence by good Consequence it may be inferred, that Offences against the positive Ordinances of Christ, will be less heinously taken, than Offences against those Precepts which are of natural Obligation, I should then have had nothing to say; but instead of attempting this (which, I suppose, he saw would be attempting an Impossibility) he contents himself barely with saying, that *the ONE is OFTEN spoken of, and the OTHER but SELDOM*. This Observation in some Sense is true, and in some Sense false: Absolutely speaking it is true, that the Sacred Writers have not so frequently urged the Observance of the Sacraments as they have the Observance of Moral Duties; but comparatively, or considering the Occasion there was to insist upon each, it is not so. As to Baptism, it was commanded by our Saviour to be performed upon all those who should believe in him, and accordingly it is mentioned in the Sacred History so often as it gives us a particular Account of any Converts made to the Christian Faith; which shews that it was universally insisted upon. Now this Ordinance being to be perform'd but once, there could be no Occasion to mention it to, and on the Account of, those who were already baptized, any otherwise than in the way of Remembrance, to keep up in them a lively Sense of that Obligation, which thereby they had laid themselves under to Holiness of Conversation, and of the Mercy of God in redeeming them from a State of Sin and Death; and this is frequently done in the Epistles. As to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, it was also commanded to be observed by all the Disciples of Christ in Remembrance of him; and we have many Instances of its Celebration recorded in the New Testament. It was in those Days a part of the daily Devotions of Christians, and therefore 'tis insisted upon just as much as the Publick Worship of God is insisted upon. If this will not satisfy Mr. Burnet, the two following Reasons, equally applicable to both Sacraments (I hope) will; viz. 1. That there was no Occasion so frequently to insist upon the Necessity of observing the Sacraments, because this was then no Matter of Dispute among Christians. There were not in those Days, as there are in these, Men within the Church, and of the Sacred Order too, who durst presume to say any thing derogatory to the Institutions of Christ. If there had, the Apostles without Doubt would have resented the unnatural Abuse, with the same Warmth of Zeal, which they have shewn in other, even lesser Matters, upon the like Occasion. 2. 'Tis not so natural for Men to act in Contradiction to their Principles, in reference to the positive Institutions of Christ, as it is in reference to Moral Duties; or rather, the Neglect of the former, by such as own them to be Duties, never is without some Corruption with regard to the latter. To discharge the Duties of moral Honesty, is to act in Opposition to Flesh and Blood, by which we are but too often prevailed upon to approve of those Things in our Actions, which in our Consciences we condemn, or (as St. Paul has very strongly expressed it) to do even that which we hate. But the Observance of the positive Institutions of Christ, in it self, carries with it no Opposition to Flesh and Blood, and therefore it always implies some Defect in Morality, when Men, consenting to the Duty, do yet neglect the Performance of it. This then gives another good Reason, why the Sacred Writers have so much insisted upon the Observance of Moral Duties, and comparatively so little upon the Observance of positive Institutions, even because the Duties of Morality were Points in which Christians were most prone to offend, and to which if Obedience could once be secured, Obedience in those other Points would naturally follow. The Precepts of Sobriety, Righteousness and Godliness, were inculcated upon them, not so much to correct the Errors of their Judgments, as the Depravities of their Wills; not because they wanted to be informed that they ought to be sober, righteous, and godly, but that what they knew even by the Light of Nature, as well as the Law of the Gospel, to be their Duty, they might be the more careful and diligent to perform. St. Peter

has expressly declared this to be the End of his enforcing these Things, in his Second Epistle, Chap. 1. where having exhorted the Christians to whom he wrote, (*Ver. 5.*) to give all Diligence, to add to their Faith, Vertue, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godliness, Brotherly-Kindness, and Charity; he gives this Reason, *Ver. 12, 13.* Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in Remembrance of these Things, THOUGH YE KNOW them and be ESTABLISHED in the present Truth; yea I think it meet, as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to STIR YOU UP by putting you in Remembrance.

MR. BURNET now sees that his Objection will admit of a very rational Solution, without supposing that the Gospel has laid less Weight upon the positive Institutions of Christ, than upon Matters of another Nature. In truth the Gospel in its way of commanding makes no Difference. The Sacraments have the Divine Sanction as well as the Duties of Natural Religion; nor have we the least Intimation given us that God will dispense with the Neglect of the one, any more than he will with the Neglect of the other. But if after all Mr. Burnet should think that he has been doing Service to Christianity, by his worthy Endeavours to lessen the Value of these Holy Ordinances; I shall only beseech him to consider, how he would be thought of, should he treat the Laws of his Country after the same Manner in which he has treated the Laws of the Gospel. The Statutes which we are under as Civil Subjects, are of different Sorts, some tending more, and some less, to the Good of the Commonwealth; but all are enjoined by the same Authority, and many under the same Penalty. Let us suppose now some Disorder in the State, occasioned by the Disposition of a certain Party of Men, to throw off certain Laws in Force. What might reasonably be expected from an honest Subject, or a faithful Minister of State on this Occasion? Would it be his Business to press Obedience to the Legislature, or to search out Flaws in Acts of Parliament, and fall to distinguishing upon the Statute Book? To tell Men that all Laws enacted by Publick Authority, ought alike to be comply'd with; or to take Pains to convince them that they may break some with very little Hazzard? To inform them gravely, that the Government has laid very small Weight upon those Things, about which they are uneasy, in Comparison to the great Weight it has laid upon Things of another Nature? If he that should take this latter Course were not esteemed a Nourisher of Sedition, and disaffected to the Laws of the Land; the World must be grown very dull and stupid.——Away then with your Comparisons; or if you have not the Heart to give to the Sacraments that Honour which belongs to them as the Institutions of Christ, e'en throw them up at once as the Inventions of Men, and then we shall the better know how to deal with you.

If I have dwelt too long upon these Matters, the Importance of the Subject will, I hope, be something of an Apology for me. I now go on, resuming what has been laid down above, *viz.* That Baptism is an Ordinance appointed by Christ and prescribed in the Gospel, as a necessary Means to convey to us the forgiveness of past Sins, and to give us an admittance into the Covenant of Grace. Accordingly, when any one believing in Christ (and qualified by a Sincere Repentance) has received Baptism, his past Sins are thereupon immediately forgiven him. He is taken into Covenant with God, and his Title to Eternal Life now entirely depends upon his Performance of the Conditions stipulated in, and by that Covenant. These Conditions are all of them included under, and contain no less than, this one, *viz.* Obedience to all the Laws, or Commandments of Christ, whether they more immediately relate to Faith or Manners; a Point so evident almost from every Page in the Gospel, that it is needless to alledge any particular Texts to prove it. But hereupon *Silvius* makes this Inquiry, (*c*) *Are we bound to* (*i. e.* Does it lye upon us as the Com-

(c) Examination of certain Doctrines, &c. p. 8.

dition of our Salvation that we do) Believe explicitly EVERY Doctrine that is revealed in the New Testament, and in that Sense wherein it is revealed, and to Practice ALL the Duties of it precisely, according to the Design and Intention of our Lawgiver? Which Question contains Two, viz. 1. Whether it be required of us as the Condition of our Salvation, that we Believe explicitly every Doctrine that is revealed in the New Testament, and Practice all the Duties of it. 2. Whether it be required of us also that we Believe every Doctrine revealed in the New Testament, in that Sense wherein it is revealed, and Practice every Duty according to the Design and Intention of our Lawgiver? The last of these two Questions is apparently frivolous. For the Doctrines of the Gospel are the Doctrines of the Gospel in no other Sense, than in that wherein they were Revealed; nor are the Duties of the Gospel, the Duties of the Gospel in any other Sense, than that which answers the Design and Intention of the Lawgiver. If indeed the Doctrines and Precepts of the Gospel were barely so many Words or Syllables put together after a certain manner (which, one would think, is *Silvius's* Notion) there would be ground enough for the Distinction. But however he is pleas'd to write, doubtless this Author very well understands, that the Doctrines and Precepts of the Gospel, are not the Words of the Gospel, but the Matters, or Things signified or intended by those Words. He therefore who understands the Words of the Gospel in a Sense different from that in which they were us'd by the Sacred Writers, doth not believe the Gospel Doctrines, but his own Doctrines. And he who Practices that as a Duty, which Christ never intended to lay upon him, doth not Practice a Christian Duty, he follows his own Imagination.

SETTING this Question therefore aside as a mere Nullity, I shall reply to the First only; and because all Duty is founded upon some Doctrine, it needs only be considered, Whether it be required as a Condition of our Salvation, that we believe EVERY Doctrine revealed in the New Testament. For nobody doubts whether, when a Scripture Doctrine is rightly understood, it be a Condition of our Salvation, that we Practice the Duty injoin'd by that Doctrine. Now my Answer to this Question, is this, viz. That if by every Doctrine revealed in the New Testament, *Silvius* means every Truth taught, or delivered in the New Testament, then the Belief of every Doctrine revealed in the New Testament is not required of us as a Condition of Salvation. For who will say, that it is a Condition of Salvation, v. g. that we be acquainted with every Particular relating to the Life and Acts of our Saviour, and his Apostles, which the Scriptures have recorded? But if by the Doctrines of the New Testament be understood (what alone I think can properly be understood) those Truths relating to the Knowledge of God, and his Method of Salvation by Jesus Christ, which Jesus Christ came on purpose to reveal, or declare; and which accordingly he and his Apostles after him constantly taught, and inculcated; if this (I say) be meant by the Doctrines of the Gospel, I maintain then that the Belief of every Doctrine revealed in the Gospel is required as a Condition of our Salvation. To distinguish this latter Sort of Gospel Truths from the former, will I think be no hard matter to Men of ordinary Care and Understanding; but how great soever the Difficulties may be, which arise upon this Point, I am no more concerned in them than my Opposers. For though they do not say, any more than we, that we are required to believe every Gospel Truth, yet thus much at least, they must and do acknowledge with us, that there are some Gospel Truths, which it is the Will of Christ, that all his Disciples should be instructed in, and the Disbelief or Ignorance of which, nothing but want of Abilities can excuse. Now these must be the very same Doctrines with, and no other than those, which Jesus Christ came purposely to reveal, or declare, unless you will say, that Jesus Christ came purposely to reveal or declare any thing which yet it was not his Will that his Disciples should be instructed in, or which he did not care whe-

ther they believed or not. If now these Gentlemen distinguish this Sort of Truths from the other, we will either agree with them in what they shall offer, or we will shew them our Reasons why we cannot; If neither of us can, the Consequence will lye just as hard upon them, as it will upon us. Since then this Point can make no Difference between us, as to the present Case, let us suppose it to be adjusted, *i. e.* let us suppose it to be agreed upon, what those Truths are which Jesus Christ wills and desires that his Disciples should be instructed in. The Question now is, whether the Gospel has required the Belief of all these Truths as the Condition of our Salvation. I say it has; and if *Silvius* will say it has not, he must shew either that it requires the Belief of none of them, or, if it requires the Belief of some of them, which those are the Belief whereof it does not require. But the Gospel has made no distinction in this Case, having manifestly laid our Salvation upon a Belief of all the Doctrines of Christ. As to those which Teach, or Command, something to be perform'd by us, the Case is clear; for we cannot keep the Commandments of Christ, unless we first of all believe them to be his Commandments, and yet the keeping all the Commandments of Christ is enjoined as the Condition of our Salvation. And so is the Belief of all his Doctrines in general of what kind soever. For the Belief of the Gospel is every where required; and what is the Belief of the Gospel, but the Belief of those Doctrines which are taught by the Gospel? But our Saviour himself has fully decided this Point, *Joh. 12. 48.* where he has declared his Words, *i. e.* his Doctrines to be the Rule, by which we shall be judged, and by consequence, that the Belief of them is required as the Condition of our Salvation. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not MY WORDS, hath one that judgeth him: THE WORD that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last Day.*

I OMIT to mention the several other Places in the New Testament, where hearing and receiving the Words of Christ is spoken of as the Condition of our Salvation, as thinking the Case sufficiently clear. In truth, that a Belief of the Doctrines of Christ is required of all those who are required to believe, and do believe in Christ, is what common Sense might inform us, seeing the only End of our believing in Christ, is that we may believe his Doctrines. *Silvius* therefore, in this Dispute, might very well have spared his Distinction of Doctrines into Fundamental and not Fundamental, as that for which in one Sense there is no room, and which in another is nothing to the Purpose. Take Doctrines as signifying Scripture Truths at large, and 'tis nothing to the Purpose to inquire which are Fundamental, or not Fundamental. Take it as signifying those Scripture Truths only, which Jesus Christ came purposely to reveal or declare, and the Gospel allows of no such Distinction. ALL are Fundamental in this Sense, that it is the Will of Christ, that they should be believed, and he hath made this Belief a Condition of our Salvation. Here then I rest; concluding with this general Assertion, *viz.* "That the CONDITIONS of SALVATION prescribed by the Gospel to those who believe in JESUS CHRIST are, That by being BAPTIZED according to CHRIST'S Institution, they be received into the COVENANT, and then FULFIL the LAWS of that COVENANT, *i. e.* BELIEVE ALL THE DOCTRINES and PRACTICE ALL THE DUTIES Taught and Commanded by JESUS CHRIST." Only let us observe, that the Gospel Covenant having left room for Repentance, the Condition of that Covenant cannot therefore be, that we never Transgress Christ's Laws; but either that we do not transgress, or if we do, that we return again to a State of Obedience, so as to be found in that State when we shall be call'd to give up our Accounts to God.

C H A P. VI.

Whether the Gospel has any where promised a Dispensation to the Breach of the aforementioned Conditions, in Case of Sincerity.

HAVING thus laid before you the Conditions of Salvation required of those who believe in Christ, as I find them set down in the Gospel; I am next to Examine the Opinion of those, who are for resolving all into the single Qualification of Sincerity. Now these Gentlemen do not deny but that some Things are ordinarily required of Believers in the Gospel, as the Conditions of Salvation; but their Opinion is, that Salvation is not so inseparably annexed to these Conditions, but that it is also promised, even to those who break these Conditions, provided this happens merely through want of Abilities to perform them. This I take to be their meaning, when they say that Sincerity is the ONLY Condition which the Gospel prescribes to Believers; not as if the Gospel had commanded no other Thing, but that Men should be sincere, (for this is Nonsense, Sincerity supposing some Command or other, in reference to which, a Man is said to have acted sincerely;) but that Sincerity, or an honest Endeavour to obey his Commands, is the only Qualification in a Believer which God hath promised finally to regard. The Question therefore is, whether in this Case the Gospel any where promises a Dispensation to the Breach of the abovementioned Conditions; and in Answer to this, I say that the Gospel no where supposes any such Case, but considers all those who transgress the Laws of Christ as Insincere. This will appear very plain from the following Observations, viz.

1. FROM the express Words of St. Paul, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ—should shine unto them.* That this relates to Believers as well as Unbelievers, is plain from what goes before; where the Apostle had been particularly careful to recommend himself to the *Corinthians*, on the Account of his Diligence and Fidelity in the Execution of his Office, in Opposition to the base Practices of certain false Apostles among them, who had endeavoured to bring him into Disrepute, and upon the Ruins of his Character to establish their own. That this was the Reason why this Apostle (who being of a modest and humble Disposition, was never forward in his own Praise) hath said so many great things of himself here, and other Parts of this Epistle, may be seen at large Chap. 10, and 11. But it is not obscurely hinted at Chap. 1. 12. and 2. 17. *Our rejoicing is this, the Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom—we have had our Conversation in the World, and more abundantly to you-wards.—For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God, but as of Sincerity, but as of God,—speak we in Christ.* In the 3d Chapter, he appeals to the Fruits of his Labour among them, as a sufficient Confirmation of this Truth; and having made a short Digression concerning the excellency of the Ministration to which he had been called, he proceeds, Chap. 4. *Therefore seeing we have this Ministry, as we have received Mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of Dishonesty, not walking in Craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by Manifestation of the Truth, commending our selves to every Man's Conscience in the sight of God.* Which is as if he had said, “We have used none of those vile Arts, which Shame might make us disguise and conceal (as do your false Apostles, deceitful Workers, Chap. 11. 13.) No, we have dealt simply and plainly with you, approving our selves to every Man

“ among you, as those who act in the sight of God, and must give an Account
 “ of our Behaviour.” Now then if after this plain and open Declaration of
 the Truth, *our Gospel, i. e. the Doctrine of the Gospel* be hid, or not under-
 stood, *it is hid to them only, that are lost, &c. &c., among whom, the God of this*
World hath blinded the Minds of them that believe not. “ Here is (saith Dr. Whit-
 “ by) an *Hyperbaton*, the true Sense and Position of the Words being thus :
 “ *Among whom are the Unbelievers, whose Minds the God of this World hath blind-*
 “ *ed.*” So that the Unbelievers were only a part of these, from whom the
 Gospel was hid. And the Observation which he makes from the whole Pas-
 sage, exactly answers the Sense of St. Paul, viz. “ That the Apostles delivered
 “ the Gospel in all things necessary to be believed, or done with sufficient
 “ plainness and perspicuity. That the Gospel was not hid from any for want
 “ of clearness on the part of them that preached it, but only by reason of
 “ that Blindness which Satan had wrought in the Minds of them that heard
 “ it.” Agreeably hereto I observe,

2. THAT not embracing or departing from the Faith of the Gospel, is in
 Scripture constantly represented as the Fruit of an Evil and corrupt Mind. *Take*
heed, Brethren, says the Apostle, lest there be in any of you an EVIL HEART of
UNBELIEF, in departing from the living God. Heb. 3. 12. and Rom. 16. 17, 18.
I beseech you, Brethren, Mark them which cause Divisions and Offences contrary to
the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them : For they that are SUCH, serve
NOT our Lord Jesus Christ, BUT THEIR OWN BELLIES. So also, 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25,
 26. *The Servant of the Lord must be——apt to Teach, Patient ; in Meekness instru-*
cting those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them REPENTANCE
to the acknowledging of the Truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the
SNARE of the Devil, &c. The same Character we have, Chap. 3. ver. 5, 6, 8.
Having a form of godliness, but denying the Power thereof.——OF THIS SORT are
they which creep into Houses.——So do these also RESIST the Truth ; Men of COR-
RUPT MINDS. And as were the Deceivers, so also were the Deceived, *silly*
Women LADEN with SINS, led away with divers LUSTS ; the Consequence of
which was, that they were ever learning, and never able to come to the Know-
ledge of the Truth. In short, that St. Paul supposes Heresies from the Faith of
 the Gospel to be the Fruits of an evil Heart, is evident from hence, that he
 hath ranked them among the Works of the Flesh. Gal. 5. 20. And so in
 effect has St. John. *He that knoweth God, heareth us, i. e. receiveth our Doctrine :*
He that is not of God, heareth not us. 1 Joh. 4. 6. Again, *Whosoever transgresseth,*
and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, hath not God. —— And therefore, *If*
there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your House,
neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his
EVIL DEEDS. 2 Joh. 9, 10, 11.

3. As the not embracing, or departing from the true Faith of the Gospel,
 is represented in Scripture as the Effect of a corrupted Mind, so the embracing
 and holding it fast is made the Rule or Standard, by which we may certainly
 judge of our sincere Love towards God. *He that hath my Commandments, and*
keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.——If any Man love me, he will keep my Words.
 ——*He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings,* says our Lord. Joh. 14. 21,
 23, 24. And Chap. 8. ver. 31. *If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my Disci-*
ples indeed. Again, Chap. 15. 14. *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever I com-*
mand you. Instances of this sort need not be multiplied. Every one knows
 how constant a thing it is with the Sacred Writers to measure our Affections
 towards God, by our Obedience to his Commandments, which certainly is a
 very improper way of arguing, if you suppose at the same time, that to love
 God, and to break his Commandments, are consistent things. Hence I argue,
 that the Gospel was not preached upon any such Supposition ; which will ap-
 pear yet farther by observing,

4. THAT

4. THAT our Saviour in all those Parables and Similitudes, by which he has represented to us the Effects of his Doctrine on the Minds of Men, has no where made any such Supposition. In the 7th of *St. Matthew, ver. 24. & seq.* his Hearers are divided into two sorts, *viz.* those who *hear his Sayings, and do them*; and those who *hear them, and do them not*. The former are compared to the *wise Man who built his House upon a Rock*; and the latter to the *foolish Man who built upon the Sand*. To which now will you compare him, who having heard the Word of God, sincerely purposeth in his Heart to do the Will of Christ, but (through Mistake) doeth it not? To the wise Man no doubt. But our Saviour's *wise Man* is one who *both heareth and doeth*, and consequently our Saviour put no such Case as is here supposed. But the Parable of the Sower is of all others the most particular and full to the Purpose: Here the Hearers of Christ's Doctrine are divided into four Sorts, *viz.* 1. Those who *hear it and understand it not*. 2. Those who *having received the Word with Joy, are offended when Tribulation or Persecution ariseth*. 3. Those in whom *the Word is choaked by the Cares of the World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches*. These are the three first Sorts, amongst which 'tis plain that the sincere Persons, concerning whom the Question now is, cannot be numbred. For the second and third are supposed to understand the Word, and only charged with Unfruitfulness under it: the Reason of which Unfruitfulness is declared to be the Prevalency of their fleshly Appetites. The *first* are said indeed not to understand the Word, but then they are supposed insincere; for it is said of these, *Matt. 13. 19.* that *the WICKED ONE catcheth away that which is sown in their Hearts*. Either therefore they must be of the fourth and last Sort, or our Saviour has entirely left them out: But they are not of the fourth Sort; for these are not they who sincerely break the Laws of Christ, but *they which in an honest and good Heart, having heard the Word KEEP it, and bring forth Fruit with Patience*, *Luk. 8. 15.* A plain Supposition, that whoever is endued with an honest and a good Heart, *i. e.* whoever is sincere, will not break, but keep Christ's Commandments.

THESE are the Scripture Representations, agreeably to which Obedience to the Gospel is injoin'd universally upon all to whom the Gospel is preached, with the Promise of Eternal Life on the one hand, and the Threatning of Eternal Damnation on the other. Now from hence I do not mean to argue, that either our Saviour or his Apostles, judged it impossible that there should be any, who might break his Commandments sincerely, *i. e.* merely for want of Abilities to fulfil them (for they certainly knew there were many such.) But this I say, and I think it very evidently appears, that the Gospel concerns it self with no such Persons. I have already observed to you, that so far as a Man is unqualified merely through want of Abilities to fulfil a Law, so far he is not a proper Subject of that Law. Now the Gospel considers all its Hearers as proper Subjects of its Laws, and upon this foot its Laws are imposed universally upon all; its Promises and its Threatnings are extended to all; those who keep Christ's Commandments are represented universally as Lovers of God, and worthy of Reward; and those who transgress them, no less universally as Enemies to him, and therefore deserving his Wrath and Condemnation. So far therefore as a Believer sincerely (*i. e.* merely through want of Abilities) transgresseth the Laws of the Gospel, so far the Gospel meddles not with him. The Laws which he transgresseth are not obligatory upon him; the Promises and the Threatnings annexed to them, do neither of them in any wise appertain unto him: In a word, in reference to these Laws, he is in the very same State that a Natural, or Idiot is in with reference to the whole; and consequently with respect to any Claim or Title to Salvation which he has by the Gospel (the Promises whereof are made upon no other Condition, than that of Universal Obedience) he is in the very same Condition that he would have been in, had the Gospel never been Preached to him.

To conclude, the Gospel is an Appeal to the Reason of Men. It supposes therefore both that Men have Reason, and that its Evidences are (as in truth they are) sufficient to convince and satisfy Reason. With those who have not Reason (which, more or less is the Case of all those who sincerely offend against the Gospel) it has nothing to do. For had God intended by the Gospel to provide for the Case of such, he would surely in his way of commanding, have distinguished between those who are the Subjects of his Laws, and those who are not; Obedience to the Gospel would not have been so universally injoin'd to those who should hear the Gospel; the Threatnings of Damnation would somewhere at least have been expressly limited to wilful Transgressors; and those who shall reject or depart from the Faith of the Gospel, would sometimes have been represented under better Characters, than they now constantly are.—But all this I shall very freely give up as of no Weight, whenever those who plead for sincere Disobedience, will produce me so much as one single Place, where that Case is plainly Stated and Resolved; which I am satisfied they will never be able to do. To Argue from those general Declarations where Eternal Life is promised to those that love and fear God, and the like, will be to no purpose. For besides that this Argument will prove too much, it concluding as much in Favour of honest Heathens (whom I have already shewn to be out of the Covenant) as it does in Favour of sincere mistaken Christians, besides this, I say, it manifestly begs the thing in Dispute. For to say that the Sense of these Places is, that God will give Eternal Life, to those who use their best Endeavours to please him, though they fail in the performance of what he has commanded, is to suppose that the Gospel makes a Distinction, which I say it does not make, and which it can never be proved to have made merely by the force of these Passages. The Question is, whether the Gospel separates Sincerity from Obedience to God's Commandments. If it does, let it be shewn; if it cannot, these general Passages will not help you: For then to love or fear God and to keep his Commandments MAY, at least in the Gospel usage, signify one and the same thing. As to particular Texts, I know of none that come up to the Point. Our Saviour has once indeed mentioned the Case of a *Servant who knew not his Master's Will, and did commit things worthy of Stripes*, but this is clearly wide of the Matter. For this Servant was not of the Number of those to whom the Gospel was made known, our Saviour constantly supposing of all such, that they knew their Master's Will, and were therefore left inexcusable. *If I had not spoken unto them, they had not had Sin, but now they have no Cloak for their Sin.* The Servant therefore, who knew not his Lord's Will, was the Heathen to whom the preaching of the Gospel never came. Concerning these our Saviour says, that though they had *committed things worthy of Stripes*, yet they should be *beaten with few Stripes; i. e.* although by Sinning against the Light of Nature, they had indeed render'd themselves worthy of Correction; yet they having had no publick Call to Repentance, as those who lived under the Ministration of the Gospel had, they deserved therefore a far less severe Chastisement. I take this to be the true and full Sense of the Passage, though I leave it to my Reader to put any other upon it, that he likes better. And this I do so much the more willing because whoever it be supposed is meant by the Servant, who knew not his Master's Will, it cannot in the least prejudice my Cause. For our Saviour does not say, that such a one shall have as good a Reward, as he who both knew and did according to his Lord's Will; but only that he shall *be beaten with few Stripes*; a Circumstance which (could I believe, that the Words did at all relate to the Point under Consideration) might be improved very much to my Advantage.

As to the Case of St. Paul, which is commonly appealed to in this Controversy, if you allow it to be pertinent to the Matter in Hand, *i. e.* if you suppose that St. Paul was Sincere, even whilst he persecuted the Church of Christ,

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it rather makes for me than against me. For all that he says of himself is, that he *obtained Mercy*, the hopes of which, God forbid that I should deny either to the Sincere or Insincere. And even this Mercy which he speaks of, was not his merciful Acceptance to Salvation at the last Day (for he speaks of it, as what he had already obtained) but his merciful Conversion to the Faith of Christ; his merciful Acceptance to that Method of obtaining Salvation, which he had so long kicked against, and trampled under Foot. This I say, was the Mercy which *St. Paul* so often reflects upon with Joy and Gratitude, even that he who was once a Persecutor, should in so marvelous a Manner be called, not only to believe in, but to be a Preacher of the Gospel of Christ; and therefore supposing him to have been at that time Sincere, this will make nothing at all towards proving that he was intitled to Eternal Life in vertue of his Sincerity. But to speak the truth, I am far from believing that *St. Paul*, whilst a Persecutor, was Sincere; in that Sense I mean, in which the Word Sincerity is used in the present Dispute. For Sincerity in the present Controversy is opposed not only to deceitful or unrighteous Dealing; but also to that Mistaken way of Acting, which arises from a criminal Neglect of the proper Means of Information. Of the first of these, *St. Paul* was certainly clear, for he did no more than what he *verily thought with himself he ought to do*. Acts 26. 9. And therefore notwithstanding this Act of his, he might very truly affirm, as he did to the *Jews*, that he *had lived in all good Conscience before God, until that Day, i. e.* that he had never at any time acted in direct opposition to the Dictates of his Conscience. Act. 23. 1. But that he had made a diligent and prudent use of the Means of Knowledge, which God had afforded him by the preaching of the Gospel, *St. Paul* no where affirms: He rather represents himself as blinded by an unreasonable Zeal for the Traditions of his Forefathers, by which it happened to him (what also happened to many of the *Jews* on the same Account, *viz.*) that the Evidence, by which the Truth came recommended, either was not at all attended to, or not considered with that Care and Impartiality which was necessary to give it its due Weight and Efficacy. This I say, in all likelihood was his Case; For otherwise I do not well see how this Apostle (allowing for the Hyperbole of the Expression) could stile himself *the chief of Sinners*, because he *persecuted the Church of Christ*. If he persecuted the Church through an unavoidable Belief that it was his Duty so to do, this indeed was his Unhappiness (at least I think so) but not his Fault: But if he had those Means afforded him, which if duly improved would have undeceived him, and yet neglected them, he was then a Sinner, and so much the more so, by how much the evil Consequences of this Neglect were greater. Yet he was a far less Sinner than he would have been, had he persecuted in opposition to the clear and evident Light of Conviction, and hereby became a proper Object of the Divine Compassion. And thus that Ignorance, which was the Reason of his Sinning, became also a Plea in his behalf towards obtaining Mercy.

THERE are two Texts more which I must not forget, because they have lately been objected as decisive in the Case. The one is that of *St. John*, 1 Epist. 3. 21. *Beloved, if our Heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God*; concerning which I need say no more, than that it labours under the same Defect with the general Passages abovementioned, *i. e.* it will prove nothing at all, unless it be first shewn, that the Apostle in his way of Reasoning, distinguishes Sincerity from keeping the Commandments of God. For if it be supposed that he whose Heart condemns him not, has kept God's Commandments, then to promise Acceptance to those whose Hearts condemn them not, is all one with promising it to those who keep God's Commandments. Now that the Apostle does argue upon this Supposition, is plain from the following Verse, where he adds, *And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his Commandment*. The Confidence towards God here spoken of, is the Confidence of obtaining what we ask of God by Prayer: This Confidence (*Ver. 21.*) is founded

upon this, that our Hearts condemn us not; and (*Ver. 22.*) upon this, that we keep God's Commandments. Who sees not then, that in the Language of the Apostle, these two Phrases import one and the same thing?

THE other Text is that of St. Paul, 2 Cor. 8. 12. *If there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* This Passage *Silvius* has just mentioned in his *Examination of certain Doctrines lately taught, and defended by me*, promising withal, that (*d*) *if I can produce any Text that speaks more plainly against his Opinion, than this speaks for it, he will give it up.* I must beg leave to inform this Writer, that it concerns him indeed very much to produce particular Texts of Scripture for his Opinion; but not at all me to produce any against it. For his Opinion is, that Sincerity, exclusive of keeping the Commandments of God, intitles Men (or at least Christians) to Eternal Life and Salvation. Now if so, the Gospel I say must somewhere or other have promised Eternal Life and Salvation upon this single Condition, and *Silvius* is to shew where such a Promise is made. If he cannot do this, not a particular Text or two, but the whole Gospel in general, is against his Opinion; for his Opinion supposes that the Gospel promiseth that, which indeed it promiseth not. That I may not therefore be wanting to *Silvius* in a Matter upon which he himself has laid so much stress, and upon which the Issue of the present Dispute very much depends, I will here particularly consider his Reasoning from this Place of St. Paul, as I find it set down at large in his *Letter to the Reverend Dr. Sherlock*. Now he (*e*) presumes in the first Place, that *what the Apostle means by a WILLING MIND, that the Bishop means by SINCERITY.* This *willing Mind*, he says, is *substituted by the Apostle, in the room of those Duties which happen at any time to be impracticable to a Christian;* and hence he lays it down as a general Rule, (*f*) *That where there is an invincible Inability to perform any Duty, there a WILLING MIND, or a sincere Disposition, will be as graciously received as the Duty it self would have been.* Here lies the whole Weight of the Argument; upon which give me leave to make the following Observations, *viz.*

1. It is very improperly alledged by *Silvius*, that the Apostle has substituted a Willing Mind in the room of Duty. He is here stating the Case of Charity or Alms-giving, in which he advises (*Ver. 11.*) *a Readiness to WILL, and a Performance also out of that which we have.* And this he says will be accepted, be it little, or be it much; for, adds he, (*Ver. 12.*) *If there be first a Willing Mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* We will now with *Silvius*, put the Case of a Man willing to give, but having not to give, or (which is the same thing) willing to give more than he has to give; this Willing Mind, says he, is substituted in the room of a Duty accidentally impracticable. What, I pray, is this Duty? Why, he must say, the Duty of giving what a Man has not to give. But if I have not to give, it cannot be my Duty to give; for nothing impracticable is, or can be a Duty. If then there be no Duty in this Case, the Willing Mind cannot be substituted in the room of Duty, *i. e.* it cannot be accepted in lieu of Duty. But that which *Silvius* means, I conceive is this; that when a thing is impracticable, which were it not impracticable, would be our Duty, there a Willingness to do that thing shall be accepted as if the thing were done. This is Sense; and thus much the Words of the Apostle do indeed imply. But this will not help *Silvius*; for,

2. It is very falsely presumed that what the Apostle means by a Willing Mind, that the Bishop (I may add himself too) means by Sincerity. The

(d) P. 19.

(e) P. 7.

(f) P. 8. 9.

Cases are by no Means parallel, and the Difference lies in these two Particulars, *viz.* 1. He who gives as much as he is able to give, does as much as the Gospel has commanded in this Case; for the Rule of Proportion expressly laid down in the Gospel, is, that every Man give according to his Abilities. Here therefore is no Breach of any Gospel Command. But in the Case of Sincerity under Consideration, there is a Breach of the Gospel Commands; for the sincere Person is supposed not only not to have done that which the Gospel enjoins, but to have done that which the Gospel expressly forbids. Again; supposing (if it could be supposed) that the charitable Person has not done all that the Gospel has commanded in this Case; yet still the Cases are very different. For 2. In the Case of Charity, the Man rightly apprehends what (as is now supposed) the Gospel commands, and is desirous to do it. He would fain give, but he hath nothing to bestow. But in the Case of Sincerity there is an Unwillingness to do what the Gospel commands. The Gospel enjoins one thing; he thinks it enjoins another; and in consequence hereof, neither does nor desires to do it, but the direct contrary. This Circumstance makes so manifest a Disparity, that I wonder *Silvius's* own Instances should not discover it to him. *Publick Worship*, says he, *is manifestly a great and important Duty, but if a Man lies under an Incapacity of getting to Church, will not a good Mind and hearty Desire to discharge that Duty be accepted instead of it?* Without Doubt, Sir; and if you can shew this, and those other Instances which follow in the same Page to be pertinent, you have me for your Proselyte. That they are parallel to the Case put by *St. Paul*, I own; but that they are parallel with the Case of Sincerity, I deny. You say well, that Publick Worship is a great and important Duty, and as I said just now, where there is an Incapacity of doing this, there can be no Question but the Desire of doing it shall be as well accepted. But what if a Man, instead of sincerely desiring to repair to Church when he cannot do it, suppose because he is sick or lame, shou'd, when he is under no Incapacity at all, sincerely sit himself down at Home, not thinking that it is his Duty? This, *Silvius*, is our Case, and resolve it me from the Words of *St. Paul* if you can. Now if you want a Reason why in the other Case the Will is accepted instead of the Deed, I will tell it you; and it is this, *viz.* Because the Will is morally speaking the Deed. That which is here call'd the Deed, and which is now supposed to be wanting, is merely the external Action, or rather the external Passion. For the Body is purely passive, and its Motions consequently, in themselves, have no more of Morality, than the Motions of a Clock or any other Mechanical Engine. Moral Actions therefore are both begun and fully compleated in the Mind; for the External Act being as such void of all Morality, cannot by its Presence add to, nor by its Absence diminish from them: So that when there is a Desire of performing the Things commanded in the Gospel, a Desire, for Instance, of attending upon God's Publick Worship, a Desire of receiving the Sacraments, of doing Works of Charity, and the like; those things are performed by being desired. They are performed, I say, so far as they are Moral Actions, and consequently so far as God who considers us not as Machines, but as Moral Agents, can possibly regard them.

LET *Silvius* now look back upon the Case, and see how just he has been to his Readers. His business was to prove from Scripture, that a general Willingness to please God, will be accepted as an equivalent to the keeping of his Commandments. For this purpose he produces a Rule of *St. Paul*, which does not at all relate to a general Willingness to please God, but to a Willingness determined to some particular Act which God approves, and which under proper Circumstances, he has commanded. The Point he had to make good is, that if a Man tramples upon the Laws of Christ, honestly believing in his Heart, that he is all the while doing him a reasonable Service, 'tis the same thing, as if he had indeed done him a reasonable Service. He produces Instances (acknowledged by himself to be parallel to the Case put by *St. Paul*) in which a Man

is so far from trampling upon Christ's Laws, that he has an earnest Desire to do the things which Christ hath injoin'd, only the External Means of doing them are wanting. Finally, his business was to shew that Sincerity alone intitles us to Favour and Salvation, and yet he puts Cases where Sincerity is not alone, but attended in reality with Gospel Obedience. Now this being the Case, Methinks a less considerable Person than the *Dean of Chichester*, may be able to satisfy *Silvius's* Demand, viz. *Why the Apostle's Rule should hold only in practical Duties, and not as well in Matters of Faith.* For he may answer himself, that if the Apostle's Rule would hold as well in Matters of Faith, as in practical Duties; the Rule has nothing to do with the Question in Hand, and therefore it is impertinently alledged in either. I say moreover, that this Rule can have no place in Matters of Faith; and to apply it to Matters of Faith, is to make the Apostle talk Nonsense. *I would fain relieve the Poor, but have nothing to give.—My Charity (i. e. my Willing Mind) is accepted.* So says *Silvius*, and this indeed is the Apostle's Rule. But can you have a Desire to believe any thing, (as, for Instance, that Jesus is the Son of God) and yet not believe it? What say you? Is this Sense, or is it not? The latter surely! For what Reason can you have to desire to believe this, but only that you think it to be a Truth? But if you think it to be a Truth, do you not then believe it? O, but *I would fain believe rightly, but cannot.*——Very like so; and the Point between us is, whether this general Willingness to believe rightly, will justify you in a wrong Belief, or whether it be equivalent to believing rightly. But neither the Case you put as Parallel to this, nor the Apostle's Rule, which is Parallel to that, have any thing to do with a mere general Willingness, and therefore they are neither of them any thing to your Purpose. If now, Lastly, *Silvius* should pretend that, because a particular Willingness to do a thing whereof God approves, shall be accepted, where the External Means of doing it are wanting, therefore it may be inferr'd, that a General Willingness to please God shall be accepted, where the necessary Means of Knowledge are wanting; I shall answer, that the Inference would be just as strong, if he should say that because a sincere Obedience shall be accepted, therefore a sincere Disobedience shall also be accepted; for in truth, 'tis saying the same thing. Now were there any necessary Connexion between these two Propositions, this Dispute would be impertinent from the beginning. For who doubts, whether those who sincerely Obey Christ's Commandments, shall be accepted? The Question therefore supposes (what indeed is very plain) that there is no necessary Connexion between these things; and because there is not, we therefore appeal to the Scriptures to see whether Eternal Life and Salvation be promised to those, who sincerely break Christ's Commandments, as well as to those who sincerely keep them. The Texts which have been already produced, you see, come not up to the Point; If there are any which the Bishop, or his Friends think more to the Purpose, let them be produced also, and they shall have a fair hearing.

In the mean while, I conclude from the whole, that the Case of a Person sincerely breaking the Commandments of Christ, i. e. breaking them merely for want of Abilities to fulfil them, is a Case, which the Gospel has no where determined, but left entirely to the determination of God at the Day of Judgment. If any one should now alledge, that though the Gospel has not promised Salvation to such, yet there is great Reason to believe that he will bestow it; I answer, that I neither have, nor will have any thing to do with such Reasoners. The Question is, whether this be a Gospel Doctrine, or not; and I have, I hope, very plainly shewn that it is not. What remains is only to consider such Objections as have been offer'd on the other side; and this shall be the Subject of the ensuing Chapter.

C H A P. VII.

Containing an Answer to some Objections.

AND here in the first place it will be proper to take notice of two Arguments which his Lordship has been pleased to call DEMONSTRATIONS, but which in Truth prove nothing. The first only begs the thing in Question, for thus it stands; "What is it that justified the Protestants in setting up their own Bishops? Was it that the Popish Doctrines and Worship were corrupt, or that the Protestants were persuaded in their own Consciences that they were so? The latter without doubt, as appears from this Demonstration. Take away from them this Persuasion, They are so far from being justified that they are condemned for their Departure; give them this Persuasion again, they are condemned if they do not separate. Or in another manner, suppose a Papist not persuaded of that Corruption to separate, he is for want of that Persuasion alone condemned; suppose a Protestant, or one thoroughly persuaded of that Corruption to separate, and he is justified in so doing." *Preservat.* p. 85. What do these Words contain more than a naked Assertion, That a Protestant is justified in his Separation from the Church of Rome, merely by the Sincerity of his Choice?——But perhaps it was intended that we should trust for proof till we come to the next Demonstration. And 'tis near at hand; For go but to *pag.* 89. and there you have it. "Here (says his Lordship) I cannot forbear to mention an Argument, which I think amounts to a Demonstration in the strictest Sense of the Word.——You (Nonjurors) know there was a Schism among your selves.——Mr. *Nelson* for instance thinks himself obliged in Conscience to communicate with some of our Church. Upon this you declare he hath no Title to God's Mercy. And you and all the World allow, that if he communicates with you, whilst his Conscience tells him it is a Sin, he is Self-condemned and out of God's Favour. He is therefore intitled to God's Wrath, both if he doth communicate with you, and if he doth not. That Notion therefore which implies in it this great invincible Absurdity cannot be true." His Lordship's Demonstration, you see, rests upon this Maxim, That it is absurd to suppose a Man should be condemned which way soever he acts, provided (I presume) he acts sincerely: allowing which Rule to be just, the Argument is clearly wide of the Matter. For the Question is not what is enough to subject a Man to the Wrath of God and eternal Damnation, but what is sufficient to justify him, which are very distinct things. If a Man is not justified before God, it will not follow (God forbid) that he shall be damned: For there are Reasons for Mercy even where the Offender in strict Justice deserves Punishment; and if a Man deserves not Punishment, neither may he be intitled to any Reward. These Things will be more fully and distinctly enter'd into by and by; and therefore taking leave of his Lordship for the present, I apply my Self to his Friend *Silvius*, who because he has taken great pains in defending this Notion of the Availableness of Sincerity to Justification, deserves especial Notice. His Objections are of divers Sorts, but the chief of them may be reduced to the following Heads; *viz.* 1. Some hard Consequences, with which (as he supposes) my Opinion is attended. 2. Some direct Reasons against it. 3. Some Arguments to establish his own. I shall begin with the first of these; the chief of which are as follows, *viz.*

1. THAT my Opinion supposes a *third Lot* (even for Christians) distinct from the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Gospel Reward on the one Hand, and the Torments of Hell on the other. And thereupon I am charged, 1. with No-

velty; nothing (says he) having been more universally believed, than that either the Rewards, or the Punishments of the Gospel will be the final Portion of all its Professors. And 2. with directly contradicting that Representation, which our Saviour has given of the Day of Judgment, where we only find two States spoken of. (g) As to the Charge of Novelty, 'tis what I little expected to hear from *Silvius*, and what I suppose neither he, nor any of his Friends will lay any mighty stress upon. But for my own part I confess, I have always been of the Opinion that New Principles in Religion can never be good. For the sake therefore of those who may have the same Sentiments with my self, as to this particular, I give this Answer to the Objection, viz. That I have no where taught, nor does my Opinion suppose that there actually is a third Lot design'd in a future State distinct from the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Torments of Hell; or that the Rewards and Punishments of the Gospel will not be the final Portion of all its Professors. That if God thinks so fit, and for any thing he hath been pleased to tell us to the contrary, there possibly may be a third Lot, or that the Rewards and Punishments of the Gospel possibly may not be the final Portion of all its Professors, I do indeed suppose, and so must all those suppose, who say that God will not consign over those to the Torments of Hell, who have made it their constant Endeavours to serve him, though they have erred in the manner of doing it; and yet at the same time maintain that he may if he pleases deny them an Admittance into the Kingdom of Heaven, as having failed in the Performance of those Conditions, upon which only he has promised to bestow it. Now this is the whole of my Opinion, in which I think I have the concurrent Testimony of the best Divines to support me. For that Men shall be damned for innocent Mistakes, no body says; that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs of Right to those only who perform the Conditions upon which it is promised, and that the general Condition upon which it is promised now under the Gospel, is an universal Conformity to the Laws of the Gospel, are standing Doctrines: And how unwarily soever some may occasionally have spoken upon this Point, yet so far as I have been able to inform my self, the general way has been to rest all the hopes we can have of the Salvation of such as sincerely break Christ's Laws (where I am also desirous to leave them, to wit) upon the Mercy and Goodness of God, and not upon any thing that such can pretend to in the way of Claim or Title.

If then the Opinion it self be not (and *Silvius* does not say that it is) a Novelty; the Supposition of the possibility of a third Lot, which is but the necessary Consequence of it, can be none neither. But I confess it would be an unanswerable Objection against the Supposition, and therefore against the Opinion too, if it were true that this Supposition is contrary to our Saviour's Representation of the Day of Judgment. But the Contradiction, according to *Silvius's* own Account of the Matter, lies only in this, viz. That in our Saviour's Representation, two States are only spoken of, and no Intimation of a Third; which manifestly makes it to be no Contradiction at all. If you say that there are Two States in a Life to come, do I contradict you by saying, that there are, or may be more than Two? Surely not; neither then do I contradict our Saviour's Representation, unless it appears, that it was our Saviour's design to tell us precisely how many States there are. But no such thing appears, and if you consider what has been already said, there may be a very good Reason given why (supposing that there are more, yet) our Saviour should mention but Two; and that is, because he had the Case of two Sorts of Persons only under Consideration. That our Saviour in this Account considered the Subjects, both of the Rewards and Punishments, as those to whom the Gospel had been made known, has been proved I think beyond exception. The Case of Heathens

(g) *Examin. of certain Doctrines.* p. 3, 4.

therefore is excluded. It has also been shewn that the Case of those who sincerely disobey the Gospel, is a Case which the Gospel does not suppose: The Case of these therefore is also excluded. So that the Persons whom our Saviour in this Account had under Consideration, were only those who should sincerely Obey the Gospel, and those who should wilfully Transgress it; for which two Sorts of Men, it was sufficient for him to assign Two different States, *viz.* Eternal Life for the one, and Eternal Damnation for the other. I take this to be a full Answer to the Objection; And therefore

2. THE next hard Consequence, which lies upon my Opinion, it seems is this, *viz.* That (*b*) if it be true, an Infidel, or a Libertine, has in one respect the Advantage of the sincerely mistaken Christian, and indeed is in one Sense, nearer the Kingdom of Heaven. The sincere Christian is supposed to be involved in those Errors, out of which it is not in his Power to extricate himself; and yet according to this Doctrine, if he continues in them, he loses (I add, for this is the only Point, his Title to) the Rewards of the Gospel; whereas the Infidel and the Libertine, if they be not actually given up to a Reprobate Mind, (which certainly some are not) may recover themselves when they please, and regain their Title to the Gospel Rewards. If they repent truly, they will be absolutely saved; and yet the other, who perhaps needs no Repentance, excepting such as every Christian needs, will fall short of (I add again, his Title to) that Salvation which God has prepared for the Faithful. This Objection, how terrible soever it may appear at first sight, has really nothing in it. For the whole of it is this: A sincerely erroneous Christian cannot acquire a Title to the Rewards of the Gospel; but an Infidel or a Libertine possibly may. Therefore an Infidel or a Libertine has the Advantage of a sincerely erroneous Christian, and is nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven. But when, I pray, is it that this Infidel or Libertine has the Advantage of, and is nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven than the sincerely erroneous Christian? Not, I hope, whilst he continues to be an Infidel or Libertine. For a Man is never the nearer the Kingdom of Heaven, because he may go thither if he pleases; and if any one will not be at the pains to acquire a Title to the Rewards of the Gospel, it will be so far from being any Advantage to him, that it is in his Power to do it, that it will only serve to render him Inexcusable. It must therefore be (and so *Silvius* indeed seems to suggest) when this Infidel, or Libertine REPENTS, *i. e.* acquires true Faith, and sincerely obeys the Commandments of Christ, that he has the Advantage of, and is nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven than the sincere erroneous Christian. So that the Objection at last comes to thus much, and no more, *viz.* That according to my Doctrine, the sincerely orthodox and obedient Christian has the Advantage of, and is nearer the Kingdom of Heaven, than the sincerely erroneous and disobedient Christian! If *Silvius* can shew that there is any Absurdity in this, let him; but I must beseech him, that we hear no more of the Advantages of Libertinism and Infidelity. I make no doubt but that *Silvius* looks upon it to be (as indeed it is) a very great Absurdity, to set an Infidel or Libertine upon the same Foot with a sincerely erroneous Christian. But if an Infidel or Libertine repents and obeys the Gospel, will he not acknowledge, that he is in a State of Salvation? Will he not acknowledge, that he is at the least in as good Case as the sincerely erroneous Christian? And is he not then guilty of the same Sort of Absurdity which he now lays at my door?—But in truth, this is calling in a Circumstance which cannot possibly make any alteration in the Case, unless any one will say (what I trust no Christian will ever be brought to say, *viz.*) That though a Man believes aright, and sincerely fulfils all Christ's Commands, it ought for ever to stand as a Bar against him in his way to God's Favour, that he once stood in need of Repentance.

(b) *Ibid.* p. 5.

BUT if *Silvius* does not yet see the vanity of this Objection, I will illustrate it to him by a familiar Instance or two. It is agreed on all Hands, that of several Persons equally honest and sincere, some may attain to greater Degrees of Happiness in a Life to come than others, on the account of greater Improvements of the same, or a greater Number of Talents committed to them. It is equally certain that Men who for some part of their Lives past have been very vicious, do after they are once brought to a better Mind sometimes make greater Advancements in Vertue and Piety, than others who have always kept themselves in an uniform Course of vertuous Living. Shall now these greater Advancements intitle a Man to a greater Degree of Happiness? It is agreed, I say, that they will. And yet if *Silvius* may be heard, they will not. For this is giving the Vicious Man the Advantage over the Virtuous, and setting him nearer to a better Place in the Kingdom of Heaven! Or thus: A King observing the Fidelity and Loyalty of one of his Subjects, gives him a Post equal to his Merits; and finding it as much as he is well capable of managing, never thinks of Advancing him higher. A notorious Rebel at last turns honest, and behaves himself so well that the King takes him into his Favour likewise, and after due Proof, finding him better qualified, puts him into an Office more honourable than the first. Where now is the Fault of this? Why, in Common Sense you will say there is none. But according to *Silvius* 'tis all wrong, and he that aforehand should have supposed it so much as possible that this Rebel might be raised to a higher Station than any one honest Man in the Kingdom, would have been liable to the same hard Consequence, that I am now charged with, *i. e.* of giving Rebellion the Advantage above Loyalty, and setting the Traytor nearer to the Throne of his Sovereign, than the dutiful and obedient Subject! I will not mistrust *Silvius's* good Sense, so far as not to believe he is now fully satisfied; and therefore

3. I proceed to another *hard Consequence*, which is this; That (*i*) my *Doctrine seems to exclude from the Benefits of the Christian Covenant, all those judaizing Christians whom we read of in the New Testament. For we know* (says he) *they disbelieved some plain Doctrines of the Gospel, and even withstood the express Declarations of the Holy Ghost.* I shall dismiss this Objection with a very short Answer, *viz.* That if *Silvius* knows, and will very plainly prove (which by the way I am confident he will never be able to do) that those judaizing Christians whom we read of in the New Testament, did disbelieve some plain Doctrines of the Gospel, and even withstand the express Declarations of the Holy Ghost, I shall then grant they were excluded from any Right or Title to the Benefits of the Christian Covenant; and let him make the best of his Consequence.

4. THERE remains now but one Consequence more to be examined, which were it true, would indeed be a hard one; and that is, That (*k*) *according to my Notion, no Christian, however careful or conscientious, can possibly gain any just and well grounded Assurance of his obtaining the Salvation of the Gospel, i. e.* (as he presently explains himself) *he can never fix or be assured of his TITLE to Christ's Kingdom.* But to this I answer; That every one must be sure of his Title to the Kingdom of Christ, who is sure of his having performed those Conditions upon which it is promised. And every one may be certain of this, who can be certain what those Conditions are. Now the Doctrine maintained by me, is, that Obedience to all the Laws and Commandments of Christ, is the general Condition upon which his Kingdom is promised; and will *Silvius* venture to maintain, that the Laws and Commandments of Christ are of such a Sort, as that no Man can be certain what they are, nor consequently when he has fulfilled them? This he must do, if he will any longer pretend, that accord-

(i) *Ibid.* p. 7.

(k) *Ibid.* p. 6.

ing to my Notion, no Christian, however careful and conscientious, can be certainly assured of his Title to Christ's Kingdom. But I hope he will consider a while, before he offers so vile an Affront to the Gospel of our God and Saviour. He himself is sensible enough that (l) *to suppose the Conditions of the Gospel to be obscure, uncertain, and undeterminable, is injurious to the Wisdom and Goodness of our Lawgiver.* I will say the same thing of the Laws of the Gospel, whether he will allow an universal Obedience to them to be the Condition of our Salvation or not. The End which every wise Lawgiver proposes by making Laws, is doubtless that they might be obeyed. But Obedience will be a very precarious thing, if none of those to whom such Laws are propounded, are capable clearly and certainly to understand them. 'Tis an Affront then, I say, to the Wisdom of our Saviour, to pretend that his Laws are such, as that no sincere Christian, however careful and conscientious, can be certain that he has fulfilled them; nor is there any thing in Reason which can justify such an Assertion. All that *Silvius* has offered, is, that *we shall always be liable to Errors both small and great.*——And what then? Because a Man may possibly be mistaken, does it therefore follow that he can never be certain that he is in the right? Because a Judge may possibly err in his Determination, can he never be assured that he doth not err? Or because a Traveller may possibly turn aside out of the Way, can he therefore be never certain that he keeps it? They are Mr. *Chillingworth's* Comparisons to expose the Folly and Vanity of such Reasoning as this. And vain surely must that Reasoning be, which overthrows all Reasoning, and ends in downright Scepticism! Are the Laws of Christ, I pray you, adapted to Human Understanding, or are they not? If you say they are not, tell me, if you can, to what End they were given. If you say they are, you cannot pretend that no Man can be certain that he understands them, unless you will also maintain that no Man can be certain of any thing. And if this be the Case, it were better for us both to hold our Tongues; Disputes upon this or upon any other Point are as absurd as they are unprofitable.

THE Objection is set forth in yet stronger Terms in his Defence of a Dialogue, pag. 36. & seq. where speaking of *the Dangers and Inconveniencies attending the fixing Eternal Salvation upon too rigid Orthodoxy* (as he calls it) he says that it *naturally tends to make Men stupid, indolent and unconcerned about the Truths of Religion.* It often commits them to the Direction of Chance, or something worse. That is to say; because the Doctrine about Orthodoxy, teaches Men that their Title to Salvation depends upon their embracing the Truths of Religion; therefore it naturally tends to make them Stupid, Indolent and Unconcerned about those Truths! But what does *Silvius* mean, when he says that this Doctrine commits Men to Chance? It commits them, he knows, to the Word of God. And is it then Chance, whether by the help of God's Word, a Man understands those Truths relating to Salvation, which Jesus Christ came to declare? Why yes; It is a (m) *mere Contingency*; insomuch that if you fix our Title to Salvation upon this Foot, (n) *not one in ten Thousand*, (speaking of *Christians*, and supposing them all to be as careful about their Duty as they ought to be) CAN be intitled to it; and it may justly be doubted, whether any UNINSPIRED Man EVER WAS, or EVER WILL be so! Again; (o) ORTHODOXY, especially so universal as Mr. Stebbing requires, is SELDOM, if EVER in a Man's POWER, and by consequence it is UNPROFITABLE, and INSIGNIFICANT to ENDEAVOUR after it. That is, it is seldom, if ever in a Man's Power to understand and believe those Truths relating to the Salvation of Men, which Jesus Christ came to declare, and therefore it is unprofitable, and insignificant to attempt it! Does not this give a fine Idea of the Gospel? What follows, is not less surprizing. He tells me, that (p) *it is a sad Prostitution of the Divine Favour, to represent it as following such Qualifica-*

(l) Ibid. p. 9.

(m) P. 26.

(n) P. 29.

(o) P. 26.

(p) P. 29.

tions as are ALTOGETHER WORTHLESS. If it be considered again what those Qualifications are, which I have represented the Divine Favour as following, you cannot help concluding, that this Writer cares not what it is that HE Prostitutes. For doth he not therein reproach HIMSELF, who hath said so many fine things of simple, abstracted Truth? Who hath told us that (q) *every Step we take in sound Knowledge, may upon the single account of those Improvements it makes of our Faculties, be reckoned a Spiritual Gain, as the Progress we make in Religious Knowledge is a double Gain.* But what is worse, doth he not by this, and by all that he hath now said, reproach our Blessed Lord, and his Apostles, who came, and were sent to teach; and doth he not reproach the most Wise, and Holy God, by whose Will and Appointment they were sent to teach that Faith, the Knowledge whereof he yet declares to be a Qualification altogether Worthless; which it is a mere Contingency, whether a Man understands; which not one in ten Thousand CAN understand; and which therefore to endeavour to understand, is unprofitable, and insignificant?

BUT when a Cause is sinking under its own Weight, there is no need to aggravate. I will therefore only beg leave to take notice of two Things; the first whereof is the Inconsistency of the Bishop of Bangor and his Friends upon this Subject. In his *Answer to the Representation*, p. 98, 99. his Lordship tells us, that *it would be a deplorable Consideration indeed, if the great and important Points of Christianity, those upon which Men's Salvation depend, could not be judged of without Learning.* Here now is a very plain Acknowledgment, 1. That there are some Points upon which Men's Eternal Salvation do depend, *i. e.* which are necessary to be believed in order to Salvation. 2. That all such Points may be judged of without Learning, inasmuch that he tells us a few Lines before, that *one illiterate honest Man is as capable of judging in these Matters as a whole Council of Doctors.* This implies to my Understanding that the important Points of Christianity are obvious to every Man who will honestly and carefully set himself to consider them; and in his *Preservative* his Lordship is so sanguine upon the Matter, as to tell us, that these (r) *important Points are so plain, that they will cost you no more time (to be understood, I presume) than what is necessary to ONE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION.* *Silvius* seems to be of the same Opinion. For he tells us, that (s) *it seems necessary to suppose, that if there be such a Set of revealed Truths as are properly Fundamental, and indispensably necessary to be rightly and distinctly believed by every Christian, upon Pain of forfeiting the Benefits of the Gospel, such Truths are very plainly revealed, even so plainly, that no ordinary Christian, if honest and careful, can mistake them.* And that, in his Opinion, there is such a Set of revealed Truths, is plain from hence, that he himself has given us a (t) *Creed, or Set of revealed Truths; concerning which he saith, that it contains THE CONDITIONS of the Gospel, and that if a Man believes and does according to it, no involuntary Errors can deprive him of the Rewards of the Gospel.* This implies that the not believing this Creed is an Error, which even if it be involuntary, will deprive a Man of the Rewards of the Gospel. But there is no Danger of this; for, says he, (u) *If the Belief and Acknowledgment of the foregoing little Creed, be all that is essentially and absolutely necessary to the Faith of a Christian — No Christian will then be in Danger of being unchristianed by unavoidable Errors; which implies that no Christian can be unavoidably ignorant of this little Creed; for in truth he is no Christian without it. What this little Creed is, you shall hear hereafter.* In the mean while it is evident, that according to this Writer, and the Bishop both, all Points which are necessary to be believed in order to Salvation, are so plainly revealed in the Scripture, that no honest Man, how ignorant and illiterate soever (provided, I suppose, he can but read his Bible) can fail of understanding them. Now this is asserted, I presume, through the great

(q) P. 13, 14.

(r) P. 99.

(s) *Ibid.* p. 11.(t) *Ibid.* p. 12, 13.(u) *Ibid.* p. 14.
Dread

Dread of Popery, which (in the Imaginations of some) is now just ready to fall upon us, and which makes great use of the supposed Uncertainty of the Scriptures, in supporting some of its extravagant Claims. But then, when we come to talk with them about Sincerity, and to ask why so much Weight is laid upon this alone; so thoroughly do they forget themselves, that like Men astonished and confounded, they run into the very Jaws of the Monster they are afraid of; Then Sincerity is all in all, because (x) NOTHING ELSE IS CERTAIN, and consequently nothing else can give Support or Comfort, says my Lord of Bangor; Then (y) whatever other Scheme we follow, we leave good Christians in DARKNESS and UNCERTAINTY, ever liable to great Fears and Doubts, and Misgivings of Mind, says *Silvius*; What Uncertainties, what Fears, and Doubts are these? Is not that certain which you cannot but through your own Fault be mistaken about? Can you doubt or fear when you cannot do amiss? Or can you want Comfort when you have every thing plainly laid before you, that is necessary to that saving Knowledge, which is the true Ground of Comfort? If you cannot, why do you complain? And if you can, you are an unreasonable Man, and deserve no Comfort: I shall leave it to the Choice of his Lordship and the Gentlemen of his Party, which of these two Sides of the Question they will stand by. That they should have the Advantage of both, common Sense will not permit. And if they will maintain constantly, uniformly, and without unsaying it again, that there is no certain Knowledge of the Doctrines of the Gospel to be had from the Gospel, the World will then see whose Principles, theirs or ours, tend most to bring in Popery; or rather whether Popery or Atheism is that which we ought to be most apprehensive of. But if laying aside this extravagant Pretence, they shall abide by the other (no less extravagant one) viz. That all the important Points of Christianity, i. e. those upon which Men's Eternal Salvation depend, are so plainly revealed in the Gospel, that no honest Man, how illiterate soever, can fail of understanding them; I must then beseech them that this Dispute about Sincerity may be drop'd on their Side, which, upon this Foot, is to the last Degree absurd and impertinent. For 1. If (as this Assertion supposes) there are some Points upon which our Eternal Salvation does depend; it cannot then depend upon Sincerity merely, as they maintain. 2. If (as this assertion expressly declares) these Points are so plainly revealed in Scripture that no honest Enquirer can possibly be mistaken about them, 'tis frivolous to inquire how far Sincerity will justify a Man in a wrong Persuasion, and how far it will not. To be mistaken in any Point upon which our Salvation depends, you say is inconsistent with our being sincere; and if a Man be mistaken about any Point upon which his Salvation does not depend, what matters it whether he be mistaken sincerely or insincerely?

SEE how hard a thing it is for Error to be consistent with it self! The Truth, I conceive, lies neither on the one Side nor on the other, but in the middle between these two Assertions. The important Doctrines, or rather (for they are all of them important) the Doctrines of the Gospel, are not so obscurely delivered but that 'tis possible for us to be certain that we understand them rightly. Infallibly certain indeed we cannot always be. This is a Degree of Knowledge that does not belong to us. But such a Certainty we may have as will lay the Foundation of a steady Principle of Obedience, and minister to us such comfortable Hopes of God's Favours and the Rewards of a Life to come, as will be sufficient to support and encourage us in the way of well doing. I say moreover, that they are so plainly delivered, that the Generality of Christians may and will understand them, if they honestly apply themselves to it, by a careful Use and Improvement of those Helps which the good Providence

(x) *Preservative*, p. 97.(y) *Ibid.* 13.

of God hath afforded them. But I will not answer for every individual Person; much less will I say that every honest and careful Man above the Rank of an Idiot, can merely by the Strength of his own Faculties, or without any Help or Assistance from others more knowing than himself, find out every thing which the Scriptures teach as of Importance to Salvation; this, I say, I dare by no means affirm, because I very well know that instructing the Ignorant, *i. e.* those who are not able to instruct themselves, is one of those Ends for which God has appointed an Order of Teachers to continue for ever in his Church; and because, should I affirm this, I should contradict plain matter of Fact, which shews me every Day that there are Numbers of honest Christians (no Fools neither) who cannot without a great deal of Instruction, (nor sometimes with it) be brought to understand some of the plainest and most uncontested Truths. This now leaves room enough for the Bishop's Doctrine of Sincerity, provided he can but tell how to prove it; and withal I think 'tis as much and as little as can be said. Men may dream pleasantly, or trifle elaborately, upon the Subject if they will; but would they bring the Case to the Bar of plain natural Sense, I am confident they would find that it will admit of no other Determination.

BUT to return; the other thing which I would observe to the Reader is this, That if our Title to Salvation be uncertain upon the Foot on which I have placed it, it is not less uncertain upon the Foot of Sincerity. His Lordship, as you have seen, is pleased to tell us that nothing but Sincerity is certain, *i. e.* every Man may, and must certainly know whether he be sincere or not, though he cannot be certain of any thing else. 'Tis hard that a Man can have no Certainty of any thing but what passes within his own Breast: But presuming that by Nothing here, his Lordship means no revealed Truth, I shall beg leave so far farther to differ from him, as to say, that I know of Nothing about which we are in more Danger of being deceived, than about our own Sincerity. If indeed Sincerity were opposed to Hypocrisy only, and signified no more than an Agreement of our outward Actions with our inward Sentiments, I grant then that no Man could help knowing whether he be sincere or not. But in this Question Sincerity takes in the antecedent use of Means, *i. e.* all those Means which that Measure of Prudence or Discretion which God has given us, would have directed us to; so that upon this Foot a Man's Title to Salvation will be just as certain as he is certain that he hath acted wisely in his manner of inquiring after the Means of Salvation. And he that shall say a Man may not very easily be mistaken about this, will shew that he understands very little of himself or of the World in which he converses. But if a Man be mistaken in this, you'll say he acts partially, and he that acts partially is void of Sincerity. Very true; and I therefore say that a Man may very easily be mistaken in judging of his own Sincerity. He may be insincere, and yet think himself sincere, even because it is so very hard a matter for us who are both Judges and Parties in our own Cause, to judge impartially concerning our selves. *Silvius* has laid it down as an (2) *Observation as true as it is common*, viz. *That a Man may be prejudiced and not know it*; he might have said that so long as a Man is prejudiced, 'tis impossible that he should know it. For Prejudice is, when the Judgment is falsely predetermined in favour of this or that Party. To suppose therefore that a Man should know that he is prejudiced, is to suppose him to know that he judgeth wrong. *i. e.* that he judgeth wrong and judgeth right concerning the same thing, at the same time. Can you now tell me of any one thing in the World, which a Man is so apt to be prejudiced in favour of, as HIMSELF? If you can, let us hear what it is: If you cannot, you must confess that a Title grounded merely upon Sincerity, hath not in it that absolute

(2) Letter to Dr. Sherlock. p. 47

Certainty which his Lordship and his Friend seem to think it has. 'Tis no more certain, than it is certain that a Man is not influenced by Passion and Self-Love to pass a wrong Judgment upon his own Conduct; which as I said before, is a Point in which there is always Hazard of our being mistaken.

SILVIUS next offers me some direct Reasons why he cannot approve of my Opinion. (a) Now these Reasons, so far as I can perceive, do all of them make up but one Reason, and what that Reason is, I find it very difficult to comprehend. There are two things which he endeavours to prove, viz. 1. That I cannot say, that *we are bound* (i. e. that the Gospel has prescribed it as a Condition of our Salvation that we do) *believe explicitly EVERY Doctrine that is revealed in the New Testament, but only that there are certain FUNDAMENTAL Doctrines necessary to be believed.* This is the substance of pag. 8, and 9. and what my Thoughts are of this matter, the Reader has heard before. 2. That *no Christian, no Churches are impowered, or qualified to determine FUNDAMENTALS any otherwise, than they are plainly determined and set forth in Holy Scriptures.* This is supported, pag. 10, and 11. Now from hence he infers, pag. 12. That *my Notion cannot be well grounded, since* (says he) *it supposes some Christians to forfeit* (I add *their Title to*) *the Gospel Rewards, for want of believing such Points of Doctrine, as do not appear to be so absolutely, and indispensably necessary.* But this Conclusion has plainly no relation to the Premises. For it may be very true, that neither private Christians, nor Churches have Authority to determine Fundamentals any otherwise than they are plainly determined, and set forth in the Holy Scriptures, and yet be very false to say that My Notion supposes some Christians to forfeit their Title to the Gospel Rewards for want of believing such Points of Doctrine, as do not appear to be absolutely and indispensably necessary. In truth my Notion supposes no such matter, but the direct contrary. It takes it for certain that there are some Points of Doctrine which do appear to be absolutely and indispensably necessary to give us a Title to the Rewards of the Gospel, and the want of a Belief of these Doctrines is the very Ground, upon which I say that Title is lost. If *Silvius's* meaning be, that my Notion supposes some Christians to forfeit their Title to the Gospel Rewards for want of believing such Points of Doctrine as do not appear to THEM to be necessary, I most readily own the Consequence; and if it contains a Falshood, let it be shewn that it does. But it can never be shewn by saying that Fundamentals can be determined no otherwise than as they are set forth in the Holy Scriptures; for the Scriptures may have very plainly determined what Doctrines are fundamental, and yet Men may be mistaken about them; which if they be, there still wants a Reason why on the Account of such Mistakes they should not have forfeited their Title to those Rewards, of which the Belief of those Doctrines is made the Condition. Finally; if (which is the most probable Conjecture I can make) *Silvius's* Meaning in all this, was to shew that the Scriptures have not plainly set forth what Doctrines are fundamental, and to argue from thence, that my Notion supposes some Christians to forfeit the Gospel Rewards for want of believing such Points of Doctrine as do not appear to be absolutely and indispensably necessary; I answer 1. That herein he very plainly contradicts himself; for he himself has (as I have before observed, and shall presently shew you) set forth certain Doctrines, which he says are the Conditions of the Gospel, and the Belief of which is absolutely and universally necessary to the Faith of a Christian. And what I pray are Fundamentals, if these be not so? I answer 2. That I have already removed the Ground of this Objection, by shewing that the Gospel has declared all the Doctrines of Christ to be Fundamentals. There is no one Doctrine of Jesus Christ, the Belief of which the Gospel has not prescribed as a Condition of Salvation. Now every Doctrine

(a) Exam. of certain Doctrines. p. 8, to 12.

of this Sort I call a Fundamental, and if *Silvius* uses the Word in any other Sense, I have nothing at all to do in the Matter.

AND thus much for his Reasons against my Opinion. I come now to examine his Arguments for his own Opinion, which he propounds thus. (b) *The CONDITIONS of the Gospel appear to me to be as follows, viz. That every Member of the Christian Covenant believe and profess that JESUS CHRIST is the SON of GOD, the SAVIOUR of the World, and the LAWGIVER of Mankind, This is his Creed. Now the Practice subsequent upon such a Belief is this, viz. To inquire carefully into what Jesus Christ has taught and commanded and whatever shall at any time appear to be so taught or commanded, readily to believe the one and practice the other.* I must beg leave to observe here in the first Place, that a Man is supposed to be a Member of the Christian Covenant before he believes and professes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, &c. But this, I presume, was unwarily spoken, and therefore I shall take no farther Notice of it. 'Tis more material to remark, that this Account which *Silvius* has given of the Conditions of Salvation, agrees as little with the Bishop of *Bangor's* Doctrine (which he pretends to justify) as it does with mine. His Lordship says that Sincerity as such, intitles a Man to Salvation. Now if so, 'tis plain that whether a Man sincerely accepts Christ as his King and Lawgiver, or sincerely rejects him; whether he sincerely professes his Faith or sincerely denies it; whether he sincerely believes, that Jesus is the Son of God, in that Sense in which the Scriptures have declared him to be the Son of God, or whether he sincerely believes him in any other Sense, or in no Sense, to be the Son of God; whether he sincerely believes that Christ gave himself as a Sacrifice for our Sins, for which he made a full Atonement and Satisfaction; and that 'tis through the Vertue and Efficacy of his Merits that we have the Offer of Eternal Life, upon our Performance of the Conditions prescribed by him; whether, I say, he sincerely believes all this (which is all implied under the Notion of Christ's being the Saviour of the World) or whether he sincerely believes none of it; it is according to this Doctrine one and the same thing. But we must take *Silvius's* Opinion as he is pleased to give it us; and now let us see what Foundation there is for it. He begins with this Postulatum (c) *I look upon it as a manifest Truth, that the Conditions of the Gospel are performable by every Christian who heartily and sincerely endeavours it, which (says he) I think they cannot be on any other Grounds than what are here laid down.* Now pray observe. The Persons by whom the Conditions of the Gospel are supposed to be performable, are Christians, *i. e.* they are those who believe and acknowledge his Creed; for the Belief and Acknowledgment of this Creed, being, as he says, absolutely necessary to the Faith of a Christian, those who do not believe and acknowledge this Creed, of consequence are no Christians. By the Conditions of the Gospel then, *Silvius* does not mean the Conditions of the Gospel universally, but those Conditions which are farther required after a Man is become a Christian, *i. e.* (according to *Silvius*) after he believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Saviour of the World, and the Lawgiver of Mankind. Now these Conditions he declares are only this one, *viz. That he inquires carefully into what Christ has taught and commanded, and whatever shall at any time appear to him to be so taught or commanded, to believe the one, and practice the other,* which is only a Periphrasis for the Word SINCERITY. Thus then *Silvius* argues; The Conditions of the Gospel are performable by every Christian who desires to perform them. But if any thing were required besides Sincerity, the Conditions of the Gospel would not be performable by every Christian; therefore Sincerity is the only Condition required of a Christian. The *minor* Proposition in this Argument is manifestly absurd; for it relies upon this most false Supposition, *viz. That nothing is performable by every Christian but*

(b) *Ibid.* p. 12, 13.(c) *Ibid.* p. 13.

Sincerity. The *major* is a groundless Presumption, and the whole manner of this reasoning in general, amounts to a Confession that the Cause undertaken by *Silvius*, has no Support in the Gospel. For consider; the Question is, what are the Terms of Christian Salvation? To resolve this 'tis natural to go to the Gospel, where those Terms are laid down by God. But this *Silvius* avoids; and without regarding what the Gospel HAS said, undertakes to shew *a priori* what it MUST say, which is making an Appeal not to the Gospel, but to his own Imagination. I must desire the Reader to observe the Difference of the Arguments used on the one Side and on the other of this Question. I reason thus; the Gospel is the Word of God, and the Charter of Eternal Life. The Gospel requires Faith and Obedience as the Conditions of Eternal Life; and therefore I say, that Eternal Life belongs of Right to those only who believe and obey the Gospel. This Argument, you see, leaves God (as it is meet) to be the Prescriber of his own Terms; but *Silvius* begins with laying down a Rule for God, and says, God can require nothing as a Condition of Salvation, but what is performable by every Christian. Again, he says, that Men can have nothing certainly in their own Power, but to inquire sincerely after God's Terms, and to act according to the Result of such Inquiries; and hence he concludes that a sincere Inquiry, however productive of Errors; and a suitable Practice, however contrary to the Laws of the Gospel, gives a Title to the Rewards of the Gospel. This is the State of the Case. But surely he who takes upon him to prescribe to God in his Proceedings with Men, ought to be very cautious in what he says, and to prescribe nothing but what the unalterable Perfections of his Nature do oblige him to. I must therefore demand of *Silvius*, from which of the Divine Perfections he learn'd, that the Conditions of the Gospel must needs be of such a Sort, as to be performable by every Christian? That I presume which he will say, and the only thing that can be said, is, That it is not consistent with the Goodness of God (I say, Goodness, for Justice has manifestly nothing to do in the matter) to suppose that any Christian shou'd be deprived of the Rewards of the Gospel, without any Fault of his. But 1. He who says this, says a great deal more than he knows. For the Goodness of God is always directed by his Wisdom; and therefore unless you understood the Measure of the Divine Wisdom, you cannot be assured what the Goodness of God does oblige or not oblige him to in Cases of this Nature. God may have many wise Reasons unknown to us, why he will not bestow the Rewards of the Gospel upon those who break the Laws of the Gospel, though they do it sincerely; which if he has, his Goodness 'tis plain cannot oblige him to act in Contradiction to them. 2. The Question relates not to what actually will be the final Portion of those who sincerely break the Laws of the Gospel, but to what they can claim by the Promise of God. Admitting therefore that it were not reconcileable with the Goodness of God, to suppose that any Christian should be deprived of the Rewards of the Gospel without any Fault of his; yet if this can be no Rule whereby to determine the Nature of God's Promises, *i. e.* of his prescribed Terms, it can be of no Weight in the Case. Now that this can be no Rule whereby to determine the Nature of the Terms prescribed by God, is plain from hence, that he may at any time (if he pleases) dispense with his own Terms, and do more (though he never can do less) than he has promised. 3. This Argument concludes every whit as strongly in favour of every sincere Man (and consequently of a sincere Heathen) as it does in favour of every sincere Christian. Now concerning the Heathen, *Silvius* expresses only his (*d*) *Hopes* that they shall be saved; and so far I am willing to go with him in the Case before us. 4. This Argument equally concludes for all who are the Subjects of Future Happiness, *i. e.* who have Souls to be saved. Now 'tis in Fact certain, that Children and Idiots are not

(d) *Ibid.* p. 5.

capable of performing the Conditions of the Gospel, even as they are laid down by *Silvius*, for they are not capable of Moral Actions; and yet he will not, I presume, deny them to be Subjects of Future Happiness. Let him shew then any Reason (if he can) to salve the Goodness of God in this Case, which will not equally hold in the other also.

THIS Assertion therefore, which *Silvius* has taken for granted as a manifest Truth, I must (for the Reason above mentioned) beg leave to set aside as a manifest and fundamental Error in the Dispute. And (that I may just take notice of it by the way) 'tis this very Mistake which seems to have given Birth to that other Notion above refuted (and which is as opposite to that which *Silvius* now labours to support, as Light is to Darkness) viz. That *every thing that is necessary to be believed in order to Salvation, is so plainly delivered in the Scripture, that no sincere Man, how illiterate soever, can fail of understanding it.* It is taken for granted in the first Place, that every sincere Christian may qualify himself for Salvation, according to the Terms propounded in the Gospel, and then it is inferred (by a very just Inference indeed) that no honest Christian can possibly be mistaken about them. But as this is disputing against plain matter of Fact, so it is supposing the Scriptures to be, what there is in the Reason of the thing no Necessity to suppose they ought to be. That the Scriptures should be so plain in all necessary Points, as that the Generality of Christians, by the use of proper Helps, may be capable of understanding them, the Notions we have of the Wisdom of God, are indeed sufficient to convince us; but that they should be such, as that every individual Christian, whether he makes use of proper Helps, or makes use of none, should thereby (if he be honest and sincere) be absolutely secured from Error even in necessary things, needs not be supposed. The Difficulties which will arise upon such a State of the Case, will always be in the Hand of God, and will doubtless be considered by him according to the Rules of Justice, Truth, and Mercy.

TO return. The next Reason I find scatter'd up and down in pag. 14, 15, and 16. and the Substance of it is this, "That no Man can be obliged to what is impossible, or impracticable, except it became so through his own Fault. That to those who cannot understand the Meaning of any Law, that Law cannot properly be said to be promulged, and consequently (since Promulgation is essential to every Law) though they may in Fact depart from that Law, yet they cannot properly be said to transgress it. By this Reasoning, it seems, the Ground of my Supposition is taken away; because hereby it appears that the sincere Christian has not broken the Conditions of the Gospel." To this Argument belongs what is laid down in his Letter to Dr. Sherlock, p. 10. *It may safely be affirmed that God cannot in any Degree hate any of his Creatures, upon the Account of such Errors as are unavoidable. I am as sure of this as I am of the Truth of my own Faculties. Can a Being infinitely righteous and good, take Offence where none is given? Or can a Man give Offence in that very Case where he used all possible Endeavours to please? A good Man would not be offended at his Child or his Servant in such a Case; Dare we then impute such Rigour to the Supreme Being? But all this is clearly wide of the Matter. For the Question has no relation to the Duty of Man; it relates wholly and solely to the Promises of God. 'Tis not what a Man in some Cases, or under certain Circumstances, may in Conscience be obliged to do; but what he can claim merely in Consideration of having acted according to his Conscience. I make no question but that the sincere and honest Endeavours of a Christian to please God, will be accepted as all he was in Duty bound to. God cannot require Impossibilities, nor be angry at (much less hate) any Man for not doing more than was in his Power. But what then? Will *Silvius* say, that God can prescribe nothing as a Condition of Salvation, which to certain Persons may accidentally become impossible? Or that whoever has done all that he was in Duty bound to, is therefore intitled to the Rewards of the Gospel?*

pel? If he will, let him no longer impose upon himself and his Readers, as if he were pleading only for sincere Christians. A sincere Heathen certainly does his Duty as much as a sincere Christian; and God can no more be offended with the one for not believing the Gospel, than with the other for not obeying it. So that if merely to do a Man's Duty be sufficient to intitle him to the Rewards of the Gospel, there can in this Respect be no Difference between them. But that a Man's doing his Duty merely, or his acting according to his Conscience, is sufficient to intitle him to the Rewards of the Gospel, is the very Point in Dispute, and consequently *Silvius's* Argument which takes this for granted, only begs the thing which it lies upon him to prove. — But still; *the Ground of my Supposition is taken away*; the sincere Christian has not broken the Conditions of the Gospel. No Sir; the Ground of my Supposition is not taken away; the Business is, that you either cannot, or will not understand what the Ground of my Supposition is. The sincere Christian, I grant, has not broken the Conditions of the Gospel; he hath not transgressed, *i. e.* (for this is what you mean) he hath not sinfully transgressed those Laws which the Gospel prescribes as the Conditions of Salvation, for the Reason which you have assigned. No more has a Brute for the same Reason, *i. e.* because he is not a proper Subject of those Laws; but I hope you will not therefore pretend (though you have the same Reason) that a Brute is intitled to the Rewards of the Gospel. The Ground of my Supposition therefore is, that a sincere Christian, who acts in Contradiction to the Laws of the Gospel, has not FULFILLED the Conditions of the Gospel; and the Supposition it self is, that therefore he is not intitled to the Rewards particularly annexed to those Conditions. If you still think he is, prove it: But if you have no better Arguments than these, it were better to sit down and say nothing.

LET us now see whether his next Attempt be more successful. (e) *Both Reason and Revelation*, says he, *plainly enough instruct us, that God approves and favours Christians in proportion to their good Endeavours, and not according to the Success they meet with.* Their Obedience he ought to have said; and why the same thing may not as well be said of Heathens also, *Silvius* is desired at his leisure to inform us. But the Question is not whom God approves, but how he has promised to reward those whom he approves. If Sincerity will (as has just now been shewn) be accepted as the Discharge of all that a Man is in Duty bound to, it will follow that all sincere Persons must be equally approved, so far, I mean, as Approbation signifies a good liking of their Behaviour. But if two Persons be in this Sense equally approved, it does not follow that they shall be equally rewarded. The Servant in the Gospel who from one Pound gained Five; was (for ought we can find) as well approved as he who gained Ten; and yet the latter was made Ruler over ten Cities, whilst the former was made Ruler over but five. Now if the sincere Christian, who breaks the Laws of Christ, though equally approved, may not yet have the same Reward with the sincere Christian who fulfills the Laws of Christ; it will not then follow merely from this Consideration, that he shall have the Gospel Reward. I need not take Pains to convince *Silvius* of that whereof he seems already to be fully satisfied. In the Letter above mentioned, pag. 19. he undertakes to prove that *an Equality of FAVOUR does not infer an Equality of HAPPINESS.* How this serves his Cause, I confess, I am not able to understand; but if his Design was to retract his former Reasoning, and to shew that this Argument is nothing to the Purpose, it was honestly done. But be this as it will. The thing you see is confessed; only his manner of proving it is somewhat extraordinary, and deserves so much the rather to be taken notice of, because there would be so much the less room for the Supposition, if his Reasoning were true. There

(e) *Ibid.* p. 18.

are two Arguments then, by which he endeavours to shew, that an Equality of Favour does not infer an Equality of Happiness, viz. 1. Because *two Christians may be equally favoured, and yet not equally happy*. This Reason coincides with the thing it is brought to prove, and by consequence advances nothing. However 'tis Truth, and the Parable, I think, is a plain Instance of it. No, says *Silvius*, The Parable does not say that he who doubled his Two Talents, was less rewarded than he who doubled his FIVE. He takes his Account you see, from *Matt. 25.* where indeed there is no Mention of any Difference of Reward. But in *Luk. 19.* which is parallel to this, the Difference is expressly taken notice of, and declared to have been proportionable to the Improvement which each Man had made of his Talent, as has been already shewn you. — But 2. The other Reason is surprizing. *Two Christians*, says he, *may be supposed equally rewarded, and yet not equally happy*; and he pretends to justify it by this Instance. *Supposing the Government of Ten Cities conferred on both* — 'tis easy to perceive that it might have made one happier than the other, as being better qualified for so great a Post — *Silvius* was certainly asleep when he wrote this, and dreaming of being Mayor of a Corporation, or some such Business; for otherwise he would not so easily have perceived the Difference between the Reward of a Christian, and the Happiness of a Christian, which in common Sense are one and the same thing. If a King puts one of his Subjects into an Employment which he is not qualified for, he may possibly design it as a Reward, but in truth he chastises him. Or if a Subject by his own Folly and Wickedness, makes himself uneasy in a Post to which he is equal; he is indeed rewarded by the King, who put it into his Power to make himself happy, but he punishes himself in the Abuse of that Power. But to imagine that the different States of Men in a Life to come, should not be adapted to their different Capacities, is to ascribe Weakness to the all-wise God; and to suppose that we should throw away that Happiness which God puts into our Hands, is to suppose — we know not what. There is therefore plainly no room for *Silvius's* Distinction; neither, if there were, do I understand what it has to do in the present Controversy. My Point is, whether, because God equally approves the Conduct of sincere Christians, it therefore follows that they must have the same Reward. To say that it does not follow, is to grant me all I ask. To pretend farther, that if it did follow, yet it would not follow that they must all of them enjoy the same Happiness, is to grant me what I do not ask, what I do not want, and what indeed I cannot accept of.

THE two Cases which follow, being intended only to illustrate the foregoing Argument, which appears to be of no Weight, can therefore have none either: But you shall hear them. *You bestow an Alms on a poor Man, and he applies it to the Gratification of some Vice; Does this unhappy Event lessen your Charity?* Why no; But what is all this to the Purpose? The Case before us is the Case of a Man who sincerely transgresses the Laws of God; for the Resolution of which, *Silvius* puts the Case of a Man who transgresses no Law of God; for surely 'tis no Law, nor indeed can it be any Law upon me who am the Giver, that the Receiver applies my Alms to those honest Purposes for which I bestow them. The next is more pertinent, but not so exact in every Particular as it ought to be. *Let us consider*, says he, *an earthly Parent commanding two of his Children the same thing; the one has the Misfortune to mistake his Meaning, and so blunders in his Obedience, but at the same time shew'd as much Care and Zeal as the other. Let me but suppose the Father convinced of this, and if he be wise and kind, he will not fail to give the two Children equal Encouragement. Parents often act after this manner, even when they only suppose their Children to be equally dutiful.* — But *Silvius* very well knows that Parents do not always (and indeed they very rarely) act after this manner. Parents may, and very frequently do, make a Difference in their Dealings towards their Children, even when they are all of them equally deserving.

serving. The younger Child may be as dutiful as the Elder, and yet 'tis never thought inconsistent with the Wisdom or Goodness of a Father to give to the Elder a double Portion. But to bring the Instance a little nearer to our Case. We will suppose an earthly Parent commanding a certain thing to two of his Children, and promising a Reward upon the Performance of it. One takes his Father's Meaning rightly, and does as he is commanded; the other mistakes it, and does the direct contrary. I ask now; has this latter any Claim to the promised Reward? Common Sense will tell you he has not; and if you say that nevertheless the Father, if he be wise and kind, will give it him; I say again that this is not to the Point; the Question being not what God in Mercy may be moved to do, but what he has by Promise obliged himself to do. Besides, this must be resolved just according to the manner of the Child's Behaviour. If he comes and challenges his Father upon his Word, his Presumption will deserve Rebuke; but if in a modest and humble manner he represents to him the Ground of his Mistake, convinces him of his sincere Disposition to obey him, and desires that out of his paternal Affection he would be pleased to accept of his best Endeavours; I think truly that a wise and a kind Parent would not (without some special Reason intervening) deny him his Request. But even in this Case 'tis evident that the Parent does not gratify his Child in consequence of his being bound by his Promise, or in vertue of any Claim derived to the Child, but out of mere Tenderness and Goodness. I am very fully satisfied of what *Silvius* has farther observed, *viz.* That the *Kindness and Love of God does infinitely exceed that of the most affectionate Parents*; and therefore I have great Hope that he will act by the same Rule in the Case now before us. But that he is bound to it, I deny; and that he actually and certainly will do it, I dare not affirm, for Reasons that have been already very frequently suggested.

I HAVE now gone through those Arguments which occur in *SILVIUS's Examination of certain Doctrines lately taught and defended by me*. There is one more which I meet with in his Letter to the *Dean of Chichester*, which, he would not be pleased, I suppose, if I should overlook. He calls it *a shorter Method for dispatching the Difficulty*; and the Shortness of it is indeed the only good Property that belongs to it, for it is (if I may have leave to say so) the weakest one you shall easily meet with. I shall lay it before the Reader intire, as it stands in *pag. 12, and 13*.

THOUGH I will not maintain (as I told you before) that Sincerity is the only Term of Salvation proposed in the Gospel, yet I think it may be affirmed in that Sense wherein you seem to deny it. I presume according to you, the general Condition of the Gospel Covenant, is an adequate and exact Observation of the whole Evangelical Law. At least, I suppose, you make this the Primary Condition. But pray let us carefully consider the Matter. That the first Covenant insisted upon such a perfect and unfailling Performance, is not to be questioned; but as this is absolutely impossible with Man in his fallen Estate, I cannot see how it should have any place at all in the Christian Covenant. Let me not be misunderstood. I grant that the Evangelical Law is the true Rule of a Christian's Practice, yet I suppose with Mr. Norris, that it is not the Condition of Life. We must endeavour to obey every Precept of the Gospel; but an intire and unfinning Obedience, though it was the Term of the Covenant of Works, is not, I think, any Term of the Covenant of Grace. Make it appear that this is an Error, and it shall immediately be given up. He proceeds;

WHAT then is the chief Condition of the Second Covenant? The Author whom I last mentioned, says, the Gospel exchanges Repentance for unfinning Obedience, as the Condition of Salvation. But it seems to me that Repentance is not the Primary, but the Secondary Condition of the Gospel Covenant. It is plain that Sincerity falls short of a Legal and Literal Obedience; and 'tis as plain that it excels Repentance. And being thus below the one, and above the other, it must have

its place between them: The Consequence of which is, that if Sincerity be any Condition of the Gospel, it must precede Repentance. But this is farther evident from hence, viz. That Repentance can only be intended to make up the Failure of Sincerity, and reaches no farther. A Man may and ought to repent the not having done his best in any Instance of Duty; but he cannot have any Cause to repent his not having done what in his Circumstances was impossible for him to do. From whence I think it plainly follows, that Sincerity is not only prior to Repentance, but the very first and principal Condition of the Gospel Covenant.

You have here the Argument at large; the Design of it, you see, is to prove that Sincerity is the first and principal Condition of the Gospel Covenant; the Method of it, you may also observe, consists in determining the Precedency between an adequate exact Observation of the whole Evangelical Law (*i. e.* as he explains himself, perfect, unfinning Obedience) Sincerity and Repentance; and the whole Force of it lies in the following Dilemma, *viz.* "The primary Conditions of the Gospel Covenant, must be either a perfect unfinning Obedience, or Sincerity, or Repentance. But a perfect unfinning Obedience is no Condition of the Gospel Covenant at all; Repentance is a Condition subordinate to Sincerity; therefore Sincerity is the first and principal Condition of the Gospel Covenant." I must observe here in the first place, that the Distinction of a primary and secondary Condition, is impertinently brought into this Dispute. For 1. The Point is, whether Sincerity be the only Condition upon which the Gospel promises Salvation. Now to say that Sincerity is the primary Condition, is to suppose that there are some other Conditions, or at least that there is some other Condition with respect to which Sincerity is the Primary; that is, it is to confess that Sincerity is not the only Condition upon which the Gospel promises Salvation. I was surprized to find *Silvius* denying this to be the true State of the Question between us, which in effect he does, by saying that he *will not maintain that SINCERITY is the ONLY Term of Salvation propounded in the Gospel*; especially considering he acknowledges at the same time, that *it may be affirmed in that Sense wherein the Dean seems to deny it.* What he means, I presume, is this, *viz.* That he will not maintain that Sincerity is the only THING commanded or propounded to us in the Gospel; and it would be strange indeed if it should; for he that is commanded to be sincere, is commanded to do something sincerely, and therefore you can have no notion of Sincerity, without the Supposition of some Law. But what if *Silvius* will not maintain this? This I am sure he does maintain, *viz.* That the Gospel substitutes Sincerity in the room of, or as an Equivalent to, the Performance of such Duties as happen at any time to be impracticable to a Christian; which if it be true, Sincerity, though it be not the only Thing propounded in the Gospel, yet it will be the only Term of Salvation propounded in the Gospel. The general Condition of the Gospel, according to *Silvius*, stands thus; either sincerely obey the Laws of the Gospel, or sincerely disobey them. Now if a sincere Disobedience to the Laws of the Gospel, be just as good as a sincere Obedience, what can be more plain than that Sincerity is the only Term of Salvation which the Gospel proposes? But that you may be yet more fully satisfied of the Impertinency of this Distinction, I observe 2. That according to *Silvius's* own way of arguing upon this Distinction, Sincerity is not the primary, but the only Condition of the Gospel Covenant. For that which, with reference to Sincerity, he makes to be the secondary Condition, you see is REPENTANCE. Now *Repentance*, he tells us, *makes up the Failures of Sincerity, and reaches no farther, i. e.* it brings a Man to that Sincerity which he once wanted. But if Repentance be nothing but the Recovery of a Man from an insincere State to a sincere one, 'tis very absurdly alledged by *Silvius*, that Sincerity EXCELLS Repentance, or that it is the primary Condition of the Gospel Covenant, with respect to Repentance which is but the secondary; for in truth they are one and the same Condition, under different Denominations:

REPENTANCE

REPENTANCE in this Account is SINCERITY and nothing else; only it is called REPENTANCE retrospectively, or with a View to a Man's former Condition, in which he is supposed not to have been sincere.

SINCERITY therefore, and Repentance, being, according to *Silvius's* own Account, one and the same thing, the Competition will now lie only between perfect unfinning Obedience, and Sincerity; and the Argument will amount to just thus much and no more, *viz.* "Either a perfect unfinning Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel is the Condition of the Gospel, or Sincerity must be the (*i. e.* the only) Condition. But a perfect unfinning Obedience is not the Condition of the Gospel. Therefore, &c. The Assumption in this Argument is not to be denied. But what a wonderful thing is it that *Silvius* should be able to see no Medium between perfect unfinning Obedience on the one hand, and Sincerity, *i. e.* mere Sincerity on the other! For surely there is a very manifest one. Mere Sincerity supposes a Violation of the Laws of the Gospel. Now between sincere Disobedience, and perfect unfinning Obedience, this intervenes, to wit, a sincere imperfect, or penitential Obedience. The Gospel enjoins Obedience to all its Laws; but then it promises withal, that in Case of Transgression, a Man shall be readmitted into a State of Favour and Salvation, if he doth not offend for the time to come, *i. e.* it leaves room for Repentance. Now we consider Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel, in Conjunction with this Remedy; and consequently, the general Condition of the Gospel Covenant, according to us, is not as *Silvius* weakly presumes, that a Man never doth transgress, but (as I have before observed) either that he doth not transgress, or if he doth at any time transgress, that he returns again to a State of Obedience, so as to be finally found in that State, when he shall be called to give up his Accounts to God. This is that which I call (and I think not improperly) an imperfect penitential Obedience. It is Obedience in reference to our present State, in which we are supposed not to transgress the Laws of God. It is an imperfect Obedience in reference to the whole Course of our Lives taken together, in which our Obedience is supposed to have been more or less interrupted by Acts of Disobedience. And it is a penitential Obedience, because it takes in the Remedy of Repentance, to make it become Obedience. If this be but Sense (as I trust it is) *Silvius's* shorter Method has plainly no Reason in it, and it will appear, notwithstanding what he hath offer'd to prove the contrary, that Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel is the Condition, and the only Condition of the Gospel Covenant. I say the only Condition. For as to Sincerity, this manifestly neither is, neither can it be a Condition distinct from Obedience. It is, if you will, a Circumstance attending our Obedience, and which (so far as it implies an hearty Disposition to please God) must attend our Obedience to render it truly what it is denominated. For he who conforms himself to the Laws of the Gospel, without an hearty Disposition to please God, is not obedient; he has only the outward Form or Shadow of Obedience. Then as to Repentance; That is no Condition distinct from Obedience; for it is only a Man's returning back to that Obedience, which was once lost by Transgression. *Silvius* indeed pretends that Repentance is no more than the Recovery of a Man's Sincerity; but if he speaks of any other Repentance besides his own, he begs the Question. Gospel Repentance, I say, is a Man's returning to Gospel Obedience; and let him deny it that will. If then Sincerity, *i. e.* mere Sincerity, be not Gospel Obedience, a returning to mere Sincerity cannot be Gospel Repentance. Nor will it avail to say, that a Man cannot have any Cause to repent his not having done what in his Circumstances was impossible for him to do. He can have no Cause to charge himself with a Neglect of Duty on that account, 'tis true. But then on the other hand, if the Performance of that which is accidentally impossible to him, be a Condition of the Gospel, there is as little Cause for us to say that he hath fulfilled the Conditions of the Gospel.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Unreasonableness of attempting to convert Men from a false Persuasion to the true one, upon the Bishop's Scheme.

HAVING thus answer'd the chief Objections which have been made against the Doctrine above laid down; I beg leave in my turn to mention one Difficulty on the other Side, which it concerns his Lordship and his Friends to remove. The Objection in general is this, That if in vertue of his Sincerity, a Man's Title to the Promises of the Gospel is as secure under a false Persuasion as under the true one; there seems to be little reason for those Exhortations which we meet with in Scripture, *to contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints; to instruct the Ignorant, and them that oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give them Repentance to the acknowledgment of the Truth, &c.* It was once put to his Lordship by the Reverend the Dean of Chichester, (f) *With what Reason or Conscience he could ever endeavour to convert a Papist upon his Principle; and it is put with that Strength and Clearness, that it would be injuring the Argument not to give it you in the Dean's own Words. Let us suppose, says he, his Lordship to attempt it, and let the Papist say to him; "For what Purpose would your Lordship convert me? I am at present free from Doubts, and sincere in the Profession of Popery; and your Lordship has told me, that I am therefore in as good a Case, as fully intitled to the Favour of God, as if I were a sincere Protestant. What Advantage then do you propose to me by a Change? Is there any other Reason besides the Hopes of God's Favour, for which Men ought to change their Religion?" How this is to be answered upon his Lordship's Principle, I profess I know not; and were I of his Lordship's Opinion, I should think it one of the wickedest things in the World to disturb any Man in his settled, and sincerely embraced Errors in Religion. For since those Errors certainly intitle him to God's Favour, since an Attempt to remove them may possibly raise Doubts and Scruples, and put it out of the Man's Power to act with so clear a Persuasion of being in the Right as he did before; how could I justify my self to God or to Man, in hazarding unnecessarily my Neighbour's Title to the Favour of God, which stood secured by an happy Ignorance, and Prejudices so strong that they admitted no Doubts?*

It is easy to see that this Argument is equally good or equally bad, in reference to Men of all Sects or Persuasions, as well as to Papists; and therefore it must be allowed, that he who can give a good Answer to the Dean, will at the same time give as good a one to me. His Lordship himself has made one Attempt towards it, in his *Common Rights of Subjects*; pag. 116. But he hath clearly misstated the Case, and argued upon a Point which hath no relation to the Objection. The most he pretends to shew is this, That his Doctrine *does not make it excusable in Men to guard themselves against all future Light.* But what is this to the Purpose? That which the Dean maintains is, that upon his Lordship's Principle you can have no reason to attempt the Conversion of a Papist, because if you should convert him, you cannot propose thereby to make his Condition before God the better, &c. Now this Difficulty will not be removed by saying (what his Lordship's Answer amounts to) that if you do attempt to convert a Papist, the Papist, according to his Principle, is bound to attend to those Reasons which you offer for his Conviction; for I may accidentally be bound through the Act of another Person, to do that, which yet it is very unreasonable in him to lay me under a Necessity of doing. I may be obliged to

(f) Pref. to Remarks upon Sincerity, p. 12.

listen to the Truth when offer'd; but under some Circumstances it may be wrong in you to offer it to me. This is the Case in this very Instance. You cannot better the Condition of a Papist if you shou'd persuade him to become a Protestant; you may make him worse if you should not persuade him, and therefore 'tis unreasonable and uncharitable to attempt to persuade him.

I SHALL leave it to his Lordship once more to think of a proper Reply to this Argument, and in the mean while attend upon *Silvius*; who in a Letter to the Reverend Dr. *Sherlock*, has obliged us with a (g) Dialogue between a Papist and a Protestant, in which he has attempted a Resolution of the present Difficulty. He begins with stating the Case wrong. *If, says he, Sincerity will procure Men as much Favour, as Truth and Orthodoxy, from thence you seem to think it will follow, that they who are in the Wrong must be altogether OUT of the REACH of Conviction.* He takes the Meaning of the Objection you see (and so indeed he expressly declares it) to be, that on his Lordship's Principle the converting a Papist is an Impossibility, in which he is certainly very wide of the matter. But he has in the very same Sentence hit upon the true Point; for he adds, *and that if it were possible to convince them, it would be absurd and unreasonable to ATTEMPT it.* Here indeed is the real Difficulty, and if *Silvius* has shewn that there is any Sense in attempting it, I am thus far satisfied. He has taken the right Method I confess, for he undertakes to shew, that the converting a Papist is *not a needless and unprofitable Piece of Work, but that it is to very good Purpose wherever it succeeds, i. e.* as he explains himself a little after, *it redounds to the spiritual Advantage of the Man.* Let us see how he proves it.

TRUTH, says he, *is a real Good; for Truth will be one of the principal Enjoyments of the Blessed hereafter; which is saying he knows not what.* The Scriptures tell us that the Happiness of Heaven consists in *seeing God as he is, and in living for ever in the Enjoyment of his Love, i. e.* in the Participation of his Happiness; and this I hope is a great deal more than *simply the Enjoyment of Truth.* That the Enjoyment of Truth is one part of the Blessedness of a Life to come, there can be no doubt. But since there are other Enjoyments besides this, which we understand not, how can we know which is greater or which is less? Or how is it possible that we should understand our selves, when we presume to state the Difference in point of Excellency between those Things, *which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it entred into the Heart of Man to conceive?* He proceeds; *Even in this Life is not Truth a real Enjoyment, and one of the best and purest we meet with? Does it not bring Pleasure and Contentment to the Mind of Man?* Yes; just as much as Falshood under the Appearance of Truth; For the Mind receives Pleasure not from the real abstracted nature of Things, but from the Relation which they bear to it self. In Corporeal Perception the thing is plain and undeniable. Every one knows that the Disposition of our Bodily Organs to receive such or such a Modification from the Action or Impression of External Objects, is the Foundation of this Perception. Thus Honey, by affecting the Organs of Taste in a peculiar manner, raises that Sensation which we call Sweetness; and Gall, by affecting them in a different manner, raises that which we call Bitterness; and these Effects will always be the same, so long as the Organs are rightly disposed. But if the Organs should be so much indisposed, as to be alike Affected, or Modified upon the Impression of both these Objects, would it not be the same thing (as to the Matter of Pleasure) whether you should eat Honey, or whether you should eat Gall? Or, if it were so, that the Organs should receive the same Modification from the Application of Honey, that in a well disposed state they would receive from the Application of Gall, and *vice versâ*, would not the latter be pleasant, and the former disa-

(g) P. 16, 17, 18.

greable? Apply this now to the Case before us. Truth is a certain Agreement or Proportion between one thing and another; and the Pleasure of Truth arises from the Perception of this Agreement. When the Mind is rightly disposed, and apprehends things as they really are in themselves, this Perception cannot be but where the Agreement is; but when through an Indisposition of its Faculties it apprehends things otherwise than they are, there will then be a Perception of an Agreement, where indeed there is no Agreement; and this is the precise and formal Notion of Error. As therefore in the other Case it matters not of what sort, or how disposed the External Objects are in themselves, provided our Bodily Organs receive from them that peculiar Modification which creates sensible Pleasure; so in the present Case, neither doth it signify of what sort the Internal Objects are in themselves, provided there be that Perception of an Agreement between them, which is the Foundation of Rational Pleasure. For every Effect being proportionable to its Cause, 'tis plain that whenever there is the same Perception, (whether it arises from a real Cause or no) there must be also the same Pleasure. *Silvius* indeed tells us, that Truth *(h)* gratifies the Understanding with a Perception naturally pleasant, which Perception is altogether wanting in Error. I would have thanked him if he would have told us what that Perception is. For my own part I can find no Perception which Truth gratifies the Mind with, besides that which I have now mentioned, *viz.* The Perception of an Agreement between one thing and another; nor can I discern any other Pleasure in simple Truth, but what arises from hence. And is there not the same Perception in Error? Why no; *Silvius* seems to be of Opinion that there is not; For an Imaginary Perception (says he) is indeed no Perception at all. What does the Gentleman mean? Is it that the Perception of a thing which is Imaginary, *i. e.* which hath no real Existence, is no Perception? This is a Contradiction in Terms. Or by an Imaginary Perception, does he mean that which the Mind imagines only it hath a Perception of, but hath no Perception of? This is not Sense. For what is Imagination but Perception? If I imagine, *i. e.* if my Mind apprehends that the three Angles of a Triangle are equal to two right ones, I have then a Perception of this Equality; and so I have too if I apprehend them to be equal to two right ones and a half. In both these Cases there is a Perception of an Agreement between one thing and another; only in the one Case there is a Perception of an Agreement, where indeed there is no Agreement, and in the other the Perception of an Agreement, where there is an Agreement; in the one Case the Perception arises from a right Use, and in the other from an Indisposition of my Faculties. But though the Causes differ, the Perception is still the same; just as the Perception is the same, whether a Man looks on a yellow Object, or whether he has the Jaundice.

BUT let Truth be as great a Good as *Silvius* will have it. Let it also be one of the principal Enjoyments of the Blessed hereafter; may not a sincere Papist enjoy as much Truth hereafter as a sincere Protestant? Why *(i)* *Ceteris paribus* (says *Silvius*) it seems not probable that he will, because his Erroneous Belief having fettered his Mind, and cramped his Capacity in some measure, he is hereby thrown back as it were, or at least hindered from making such a Proficiency as he otherwise might have done. The plain English of all which is, that a Man under an Erroneous Belief cannot make such a Proficiency (in Knowledge I suppose) as a Man under a true Belief. A worthy Reason! But where, when is it, that a Sincere Papist cannot make this Proficiency? Here or hereafter? If you say here, you say nothing to the Purpose; and if hereafter, I ask, Is it necessary that a Papist should carry his Errors with him into another World? No, says *Silvius*; It is not to be doubted but his Religious Errors will be done away, and perhaps all others: But (pray mind it) still if his Capacity has been checked or straitned in this World, in all likelihood it will be some Disadvantage to him in the next. Though the

(h) Defence of a Dialogue, p. 8.

(i) P. 12.

Degrees of the Saints Happiness hereafter will chiefly be measured out by the Rule of their Moral Improvements, yet a good deal may depend upon their Intellectual. Still you see we are *straitned*. He is not unwilling to allow, that all Errors will be done away in another World; but if you ask whether these Cramps and Fetters being removed, the Mind will not be in as good a Capacity for the Enjoyment of Truth, as it would have been had it never erred; no, by no means; and if you want to know the Reason for it, it is, *in all likelihood* it will not be so; and *possibly* it *may* not be so. Who does not see by all this Coldness and Hesitation, that he has a Work upon his Hands which he cannot tell what to do with; And needs must it be so, when we aim at Things beyond the Reach of Human Understanding. That Errors hinder our Improvements in Knowledge in this Life, is I think more than enough evident. But what effect will they have upon us in a Life to come; What will be the Condition of disembodied and glorified Spirits; what the Proportion of their Knowledge with Respect to one another; and upon what Basis this Proportion is founded; these are Points which Infinite Wisdom alone can comprehend, and which therefore I will have no hand in determining, either one way or the other.

BUT this is not all that *Silvius* has to say; and 'tis very well that it is not. For he has all this while been talking about abstracted Truth, and consequently his Argument is just as good to prove that it will redound to the Spiritual Advantage of a Papist, to be instructed in the Mathematicks, as to be instructed in the Doctrines of the Gospel. I will add, that it is much better. For here is no Hazard of raising Doubts and Scruples, and certainly, if you consider merely the Extent of Knowledge, a Man may receive greater Improvements from the Theorems of *Euclid*, than he can from the Doctrines, and Precepts of the Gospel; or at least more than he can from being set right in his Notions about the Invocation of Saints, Purgatory, Transubstantiation, and the like. The Reason extends it self proportionably to all Arts and Sciences, as may very easily be thus demonstrated. Every *Art* or *Science* (k) implies an *Acquisition* of Knowledge; and every *Acquisition* of Knowledge proportionably improves and augments a Man's Capacity; and every *Advantage* of Capacity proportionably qualifies a Man for a larger Enjoyment of Truth; and so on. This is the Golden Chain! And is it not, think you, a very notable way of solving the present Difficulty, about Converting a Papist, to have recourse to an Argument which makes it every whit as reasonable to put him out to an Artificer to learn a Trade, as to send him to a Divine for Instruction? To come therefore to something more material. He tells his Papist, that the convincing him of his Errors will redound to his spiritual Advantage, in such a Sense as cannot be rejected even by himself. Now the Argument is this. (l) The Papists worship Saints; This practical Error, says he, is prejudicial to your Souls; because that Intercourse which you hold with the Creature, were it held with the Creator, would undeniably turn to a better Account. I speak not (adds he) of the Success of your Prayers, but the natural Influence and Operation which they have on the Soul. The Soul is evidently improved many ways by its Addresses to the Creator; but most of these Improvements are not to be had by Creature Worship. This Error therefore of yours, by lessening your spiritual Improvements, does in some Measure unqualify you for the Happiness of hereafter, and thereby naturally deprives you of part of that Reward which you might otherwise obtain. We are come to a very fine pass indeed, when such Metaphysicks must be called in towards resolving so plain a Question as this, What good can you do to a Papist by converting him! 'Tis with Justice that *Silvius* has made his Papist to reply, your Speculations are so fine spun they will never hold; and in treating this Answer with Contempt and Ridicule, he has only shewn himself an indiscreet Manager, in raising greater Difficulties against himself than he is able to remove. For what, I beseech you, is there in this

(k) P. 12.

(l) Dialogue, ubi supra.

elaborate Account of spiritual Advantages that can satisfy any reasonable Man? That the Prayers of a sincere Papist are attended with less Success than the Prayers of a sincere Protestant, you see he does not so much as pretend; all the Business is, that these Prayers have not the same natural Influence and Operation upon the Soul of the one, that they have upon the Soul of the other. What is this Mystery! There wants some *Oedipus* to unfold it; and the only Reason I can think of why *Silvius* himself did not undertake this kind Office, is because he found it too hard for him. He tells us indeed that the Soul is improved many ways by its Addresses to the Creator, of which I make not the least Question. But then that most of these Improvements should be lost by Creature Worship, *i. e.* (for this is the Case of the Papists) by worshipping the Creator through or by the Mediation of the Creature, is no more than barely to repeat what wants to be explained, and what for my own part I profess I am not able to understand. For what are these Improvements which *Silvius* speaks of? Why Moral Improvements to be sure; for he speaks of them as what will contribute to our obtaining a greater Degree or Measure of Happiness hereafter; and he often tells us, that the only Improvements of this sort are Moral Improvements. Now if *Silvius* will shew by very plain Arguments, that he who sincerely worships God (as the Papists do) through the Creature, may not be as good a Moral Man as he who worships God immediately, he will do something that is to the Purpose. But if not, (and I am persuaded he cannot) it were better for him to be silent. He may talk indeed about the spiritual Advantage of a Papist's Conversion; he will not reason.

BUT if this will not do, *Silvius* has Plenty of Reasons to shew, that Popery hinders the Moral Improvements of Men. And they are such as these. 1. The Church of Rome (*m*) deprives its Members of the Use of the Scriptures, which are the Principal Means of Knowledge and Instruction. 2. It (*n*) inflicts severer Penalties on supposed false Doctrines, than notorious Immoralities, and consequently corrupts the Minds and Judgments of its Members. 3. It (*o*) teaches and practices the Invocation of Saints, which hinders the Love of God and true Devotion. 4. It (*p*) enjoins such Rites and Ceremonies as naturally tend to the Prejudice and Disturbance of Divine Worship, which throws a great Obstacle in the Way of Mens Spiritual Improvements. 5. It (*q*) teaches and practices Persecution, which hinders Love and Charity. These are the Arguments; by which, if *Silvius* proposes to shew that the Religion of Papists is a Method not so well adapted and fitted to lead Men to the Practice of Vertue and Piety, as the Religion of Protestants, he is in a very safe and easy way. But if he means to prove the Nature of Popery to be such, as that there is no room, or Possibility for a Papist, how Sincere and Honest soever he be, to make such Moral Improvements as shall qualify him for as great a Degree of Happiness hereafter, (so far I mean as mere Moral Improvements are considered in the Case) as a Protestant may qualify himself for: If this, I say, be his Meaning, (which is the Point in question) in my humble Opinion he is only Disputing against Matter of Fact. For the clearing of this Point, I beg it may be considered, what sort of Moral Improvements those are which may be supposed to Qualify, or Capacitate Men for greater Degrees of Happiness hereafter. They who talk sensibly upon the Subject, say thus; That forasmuch as all Happiness consists in the Agreement, or due Proportion between the Subject and the Object; therefore those must be qualified for the greatest Degrees of Happiness in Heaven, whose Souls are most of all disposed to taste and relish that sort of Pleasure, in which the Happiness of Heaven does consist. Now the Pleasures of Heaven are of a Pure, Spiritual Nature, most opposite to those which arise from the Gratification of our Sensual Appetites; and consequently by how much the more cool a Man is in his Affections towards

(*m*) Defence. p. 18.(*n*) P. 19.(*o*) Ibid. and p. 54, 15, 16.(*p*) P. 20.(*q*) P. 21.
Earthly

Earthly Things; by how much the more he divests himself, as it were, of Flesh and Blood; by how much the more he loves God, delights in the Prospect of, and longs after the Enjoyment of his Happiness; by so much is he qualified for the greater Degrees of that Happiness. In a Word, the whole Compass of Moral Qualifications, considered as proper to capacitate us for greater Glories, will (so far as we at present can judge any thing of the Matter) fall under that one complex Notion, HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS. And let me then ask of *Silvius*; Is all the Piety which has ever been observed in the Church of *Rome*, mere out-side Formality? And have we not had as great Examples of Heavenly-mindedness in that Communion, as we have ever had in any Communion among Protestants? Let it not be thought I am pleading the Cause of Popery; but I hope I may, without Offence, mention those Vertues which have shone forth in some of its Members, and appeal to the Examples of such as an Evidence, how much is practicable, even under all its Corruptions, by those whom this Question concerns, truly Sincere and Upright Men. There have been those then among them, as well as among our selves, of whom it might have been said, that *in Labours they were more abundant, in Perils often, in Weariness and Painfulness, in Watchings often, in Cold, and in Nakedness*. There have been those who through the Vigour of a Lively Faith, the Love of God, and the Contemplation of those *Glories which shall hereafter be revealed*, have raised themselves above this World, and had *their Conversation in Heaven*, whilst they were *Strangers here upon Earth*. And what Weight can the Subtilties of Men have against such Instances as these? Do they tell us, and would they Logically prove to us, what a Sincere Papist CANNOT do? We shew them by a much more easy and certain way, that so far as we are capable of judging from what has often been experienced, what they say cannot be done, HAS been done. The Truth indeed seems to be this; That though these Doctrines and Practices of the Church of *Rome*, do in general tend to corrupt Men's Minds, and in Fact very frequently hinder the Moral Improvements of its Members; yet that this Effect is not necessary and unavoidable; and therefore it cannot reach the Behaviour of those among them who are Sincere and Upright, so as to render them less qualified (so far as mere Morality is a Qualification) for the Rewards of a Life to come. If this Effect be not necessary, it may then by a due Care be prevented: Now Sincerity supposeth this Care; a Sincere Man, in the present Question, being one who is supposed to be under such a Sense of his Duty, and such Apprehensions of the Rewards of a Life to come, as to apply his best and utmost Endeavour, both to know the Will of God, and to live obediently thereto. This may be applied not only to Papists, but to Sincere Persons in many other (however Erroneous) Sects of Religion. And what has *Silvius* (for he foresaw the Objection) done to shew the contrary? Why according to custom he tells us, that (r) SINCERE Men MAY BE in some measure seduced, and deluded by such means. — PERHAPS they may baffle great Degrees of Care and Industry. That (s) it CANNOT BE EXPECTED that Sincerity should be able to withstand intirely. — That it (t) IS NOT IN THE POWER of any private PAPIST, however SINCERE, wholly to prevent — That (u) IN ALL PROBABILITY it may be weakened. — IN ALL LIKELIHOOD it will be stopped and with-held. This is all that I can any where find to the Purpose; and the whole amounts to thus much, and no more, viz. That a truly Sincere and Upright Heart will not prevent these Evil Effects, because — it will not; or because perhaps, possibly, probably, and in all likelihood it may not.

BUT the last of these Objections, relating to the Doctrine of Persecution, ought to be more particularly spoken to, because *Silvius's* Management of it seems to be somewhat extraordinary. Having put the Question (x) *How far SIN-*

(r) P. 19.

(s) P. 20.

(t) Ibid.

(u) P. 21.

(x) Ibid.

CERE Papists may be affected by it, he immediately observes, that PERSECUTION is such a flagrant Violation of the Law of Nature, that it cannot be CONSISTENT with SINCERITY; and that to a SINCERE Person nothing CAN dissolve the Obligation of loving his Fellow Creatures, i. e. (for this is what he means) No Sincere Person can think himself disengaged from this Obligation. Is not this fine Reasoning! The Point is, whether a Sincere Papist may not make as great Moral Improvements as a Sincere Protestant. No, says *Silvius*, he cannot. But why? Why because the Church of Rome teacheth and practiseth Persecution. Now if you should think it proper to ask, whether a Sincere Papist can Teach or Practice Persecution, you have it from his own Mouth, that he can do neither. For Persecution, he tells us, is inconsistent with Sincerity; and a Sincere Man cannot but think himself obliged to love his Fellow Creatures. That is to say, a Sincere Papist is supposed to be incapacitated to make as great Moral Improvements as a Sincere Protestant; for a Reason, which he neither is, nor can be any way concerned in! He neither doth, nor can approve of Persecution, and yet he cannot improve so well, because of the Doctrine of Persecution! What Sense there is in this, let any ordinary Reader judge. But it is not without Reason taken for granted by *Silvius*, that a Man may be a Papist, and yet not hold the Doctrine of Persecution. For though Persecution be both Taught and Practised in the Church of Rome, 'tis yet no Article of Communion that I know of. The Governours of that Church think it not only Lawful, but their Duty to persecute those who separate from them; but this doth not necessarily affect the Behaviour of Private Members, and if I may have leave to speak what I think, I believe that there are thousands in that Communion who no more approve of this Unchristian Method of dealing with their Fellow-Creatures, than *Silvius* or I do. This Consideration therefore is impertinently brought into the Argument. For if it be supposed, that a Sincere Papist may, and does hold the Doctrine of Persecution, and that he is hereby unavoidably hindred from making such Moral Improvements, as he otherwise might; what is it that hinders? Why plainly not any thing which is Essential to his Profession, consider'd as a Private Person, but something which is accidental to it. It is not merely his being a Papist, but his holding a Doctrine which he might not hold consistently with his being a Papist. But the Objection has not the least Colour in it, if you say that a Sincere Papist cannot consistently with his Sincerity hold the Doctrine of Persecution; which whether it be true or not, is no Part of my Business now to inquire.

I HAVE said as much as I think it proper for me to say in Answer to *Silvius's* Objections, and he must now give me leave to (y) hope in my turn, that what has been offered contains a Satisfactory Answer to that Question; What good can you do a Papist (supposed to be Sincere) by converting him? If the Argument does not (which yet I conceive it does) come fully up to what I intend by it, the Difference at least will appear so very small, that a wise Man will hardly think it a Sufficient Ballance against those Difficulties you may bring a Papist under, if after all your Endeavours you should not be able to convert him. But, says *Silvius*, (z) If Popery was no Disadvantage to the Professors of it, yet there would be Sufficient Reason to endeavour their Conversion, because Popery is a great Stumbling-Block to Atheists, Deists, Pagans, &c. How far Popery is an Obstruction to the Conversion of Infidels; there is no need for me now to inquire. I shall only say this, that if there were any tolerable Prospect of effecting a General Conversion from Popery, we should not then want Arguments to make it Reasonable to attempt it. But so long as there are no Hopes of this, the Argument is manifestly of no Weight: For though you should convert here and there a Papist, yet if notwithstanding this whole

(y) P. 12.

(z) P. 17.

Nations will continue to be Papists still, the Stumbling-block will be the same that it was before. Yea, but *the Conversion of one single Papist is one step towards the accomplishing so good a Work.* Without doubt; and so is the Removal of one single Stone, one step towards removing a Mountain. But if any Man in Vertue of this Reasoning should employ his Time in fetching Stones from the *Alps*, I doubt he would be reckoned either a Fool or a Madman for his Pains.

UPON the whole then; Forasmuch as *Silvius* has called upon me (a) *once more to tell him, whether I think that there is any Sense in attempting to Convert a Papist on the Bishop's Principle*, I do now once more tell him, that there is none. I have according to his Desire given him some plain Reasons why I will not grant to him this Point; not solicitous whether he now thinks I have reason to say that it is too hard for him, or not. If not, I shall oblige him yet farther, being resolved to (b) *take no more fruitless Pains*, by resuming a Point which I cannot pretend to say any thing more satisfactory about, and which if *Silvius* could gain, it would be no Advantage to the main Cause in which he is concerned. You pretend, Sir, to be a great Lover of Truth; be pleased to attend a little, for I am now going to deal with you as such. You lay it down in the beginning of your Book, that (c) *If the Doctrine of Sincerity renders the Conviction of Erroneous and Deluded Men, an impracticable thing, and even makes it absurd and unreasonable to endeavour it, it must necessarily sink under the Weight of such a Difficulty.* This is your own Rule; and here is a very plain Confession, that if the Difficulty here mentioned cannot be remov'd, your Case is gone. Here then I lay my Finger, and will very quickly give you as fair an Opportunity as you can desire of trying your Ingenuity.

IN the first place then we must consider what the Difficulty is which the Cause requires should be removed; and this, he tells us, is, that *it is an absurd and unreasonable thing* (I leave out *Impracticable*, because, as has been shewn, it is no part of the Difficulty) *to endeavour to Convert*, not merely *Papists*, but *Erroneous and Deluded MEN* in general; so that the Cause must necessarily sink, if any one false Religion (for he would be understood, I suppose, to speak of Religious Errors) can be assigned, the Conversion of a Man from which the Bishop's Doctrine of Sincerity makes it Absurd and Unreasonable to attempt. Thus far *Silvius* speaks like a Man of Sense; for the main Point indeed is, not whether upon the Bishop's Principle, it is unreasonable to attempt to Convert a Man from this or that false Religion, but indefinitely from any false Religion. The Papists were indeed particularly mentioned by the *Dean*, because, I suppose, they first occur'd to his Thoughts; for 'tis evident, and *Silvius* here allows, that had he instanced in any other false Religion, the Difficulty would have been the very same. Now pray consider, by what sort of Arguments *Silvius* has endeavoured to shew, that it is reasonable to attempt the Conversion of a Papist upon his Lordship's Principles; and if you look back, you will find that the main Stress of the Cause is made to rest upon certain Corruptions peculiar to the Church of *Rome*, which are conceived to hinder the Moral Improvement of its Members. Supposing then but not granting this to be the Case, I ask of *Silvius*; Can he not conceive Popery stript of those Corruptions, and yet still to remain a false Religion? Or in other Words, cannot he conceive a false Religion so constituted as that (so far as mere Morality is considered) there shall be room for the same Improvements as under the true? If he can (and certainly he may) his Arguments from Moral Improvements will all be set aside. And if after this he can be brought to see (and I trust it will require no farther Pains to make him see) that his other Arguments are good for nothing;

(a) P. 22.

(b) P. 11.

(c) P. 4.

here then will be a false Religion, from which upon his Lordship's Principle you can have no reason to endeavour to Convert a Man, and the Cause of Consequence will be lost, by his own Confession.

It had been exactly to the same purpose, if it had been put to his Lordship: With what Reason can your Lordship attempt the Conversion of a DEIST, or a JEW, upon your Principle? And yet here 'tis plain that *Silvius's* Reasoning can have no place; for the Deist, who believes in the Existence and Providence of God, and expects a Reward, in Vertue of his Obedience to the Law of Morality, has all the Encouragement in the World to improve in Morality. The same may be said of a Jew, who expects Salvation in Vertue of his Obedience to the Law of *Moses*; because the Moral Law is a part of the Law of *Moses*. And neither of these Persuasions are liable to those Objections which *Silvius* has made against Popery. I know well enough, that his Lordship does not care to own, that his Doctrine about Sincerity reaches to such; and *Silvius*, under his Lordship's Protection, now tells me, not without some very warm Reflections upon my Honesty and Modesty, that *The Bishop's Maxim relates only to professed sincere Christians*. *Silvius* may be as confident as he pleases; But so long as I have Eyes to read, and Sense to understand, I must say, that his Lordship's Maxim includes all Sincere Persons without Exception; and that every one of the Arguments made Use of by him to support his Proposition, concludes with equal strength in favour of all sincere Persons, whether Christian, or not Christian. If his Lordship will not now justify this, why is he not so ingenuous as to own it? Why doth he not alter his Proposition, and retract his Reasoning? Whenever he will be pleased to do thus much Justice to the Cause, I promise him I shall be ready to accept his Recantation; and I give it him under my Hand, that he shall thenceforward be pressed with no Consequences by me, but such as relate to Sincere Christians. But till this is done, the Charge will, and ought to stand full against him; and I must beg of his Lordship to be excused, if I cannot accept of an *I did not think on't*, on the one hand, as an equivalent to the strongest Evidence that either Words or Arguments can give on the other.

I SHALL do *Silvius* a Pleasure perhaps by observing, that as to this Particular, he is under the very same Circumstances with his Lordship. His Arguments, in which he hath closely followed the Bishop, stand yet uncanceled; and though he no where expressly extends the Doctrine of Sincerity beyond Christians, yet neither doth he any where expressly confine it to them.—— But I will beg leave to put one Question more, which I am sure neither of them will find Fault with; and that is, With what Reason can you attempt to Convert a DISSENTER upon his Lordship's Principles? These are Christians, I hope, and amidst all the Complaints of that Want of Means, and Opportunities of Improvement in the Church of *Rome*, I hear none about the Want of them in a Protestant Conventicle. What good then, I ask, can you do to a *Dissenter* by Converting him? Why plainly, none at all; and if you say that there is reason to attempt his Conversion, because Divisions generally occasion the Breach of Charity among Christians; I answer, that if this be all, the End may be as well answered by Instructing Christians better. The *Dissenters*, I hope, want no Charity to the Church of *England*, though they think themselves oblig'd to separate from her. Ask them, and they will tell you so. And if we want Charity towards them, I hope we are capable of being convinced of the Unreasonableness of it. But whether we are or not, why, I pray, should the *Dissenters* suffer for our Want of Charity? Why should they be disturbed in the quiet Enjoyment of their Sincerely embraced Errors, and put to the fruitless

Hazard and Pains of seeking out a new Religion, merely because (as they will say) some ill disposed Men take up unreasonable Prejudices against them?

WHEN *Silvius* has considered the Case of *Dissenters*, I would desire him to take one Step more, and consider the Case of sincere *Arians* and *Socinians*. For my self, I must own that I am not without Suspicion, that this Modern Doctrine of Sincerity was raised to countenance these Errors; and if *Silvius* can shew upon his own Principles the Reasonableness and Necessity of endeavouring to Convert these Men, though he may not perhaps justify his Doctrine of Sincerity, yet he will undoubtedly ease it of a Weight, which, by his own Confession, if not removed, must sink it.

You have seen the Whole of what *Silvius* has offer'd; and in Conclusion you perceive, that this Doctrine about Sincerity, if pursued in its utmost Consequences, must have a very visible Influence upon the Practice of Mankind, and especially of the Ministers of the Gospel, who according to his Lordship's Scheme, seem to have little else to do than to sit themselves down, and suffer every Man to follow his own Imagination. I call it his Lordship's Scheme, because he has taken so much Pains to revive and inculcate it, and not because he can claim the Honour of being its first Inventor. To go no higher, 'tis as old at least as *Mahomet*, with whom (as Bishop *Burnet* has (e) observed) 'tis a Maxim, That all Men in all Religions are equally acceptable to God, if they serve him faithfully in them. Who would not be apt to conclude that his Lordship transcribed his Doctrine from the *Alcoran*! — But the Observation which the Right Reverend Prelate has made upon this Principle, is worth our Notice. *The infusing this into the World, that has a Shew of Mercy in it, made Men more easy to receive their (the Mahometans) Law. Again; Some to make themselves and others easy in accommodating their Religion to their secular Interests, to excuse their changing, and to quiet their Consciences, have set up this Notion, that seems to have a Largeness both of good Nature and Charity in it, looks plausible, and is calculated to take in the greatest Numbers: They therefore suppose, that God in his INFINITE GOODNESS (which, by the way, is a great deal less than my Lord of Bangor supposes) will accept equally the Services, that all his Creatures offer to him, according to the BEST of their SKILL and STRENGTH.* Nothing can be more just than this Reflection. This Bishop had studied Mankind; he knew to what Passions such a Doctrine was most adapted, and what Effects it would most naturally produce. 'Tis calculated, he tells us, to the Taste of those who love to take in the greatest Numbers, *i. e.* in our modern Dialect, of Men of *Comprehensive Principles*; of Men who sit loose to all Religions, and are ready to accommodate themselves to any, that their secular Interest leads them to. And who can doubt of this, who considers what Incense has been offer'd at his Lordship's Altar, by Libertines and Sectaries on this Score? His Lordship, I know, will tell me that his Doctrine gives no Encouragement to Carelessness and Indifference in Religion. No more does the same Doctrine when it comes from the Mouth of an Impostor; and Bishop *Burnet* knew it as well as he. But 'tis his Lordship's peculiar Excellency to see nothing but the certain and necessary Result of Principles; whilst others of a less demonstrative Genius, consider them with a view to the Tempers and Dispositions of Men; and judge of their Effects not merely from what in Reason ought to be, but from what, considering the Influence of their Passions, in all Probability will be. Those who are Strangers to every thing but themselves, may fancy that the Interests of Religion will be sufficiently secured, if Men be told that God will accept of their Services under any Persuasion, provided they have done their best to inform

(e) *Expos. Art. 18.*

themselves rightly. But 'tis easy enough for those who will look about them, to see that when Men are first fond of a Persuasion, and then seek to be justified in the Profession of it, they will be ready enough to lay hold of the Grant, without troubling themselves much about the Condition of it. How long his Lordship has been of this Mind I know not, and how consistently he has acted with himself I cannot tell; but surely if ever he thought it worth his while to talk with a *Dissenter* (especially one of the lower Sort) he must have discovered that nothing has contributed more towards keeping up the Schism, than this one dear Principle which he embraces with so much Fondness. How often do we hear from such, That if Men be but honest and upright in their Conversation, it will never be inquired another Day what Sect or Persuasion they have been of? Here is their resting Place, and sure Retreat; this their Teachers inculcate upon them, wisely considering that if they can but once rivet this Notion into their Heads, even Mr. *Hoadly's Reasonableness of Conformity* will be of little Weight with them. 'Tis indeed the shortest and the best Way with the Church of *England* that I know of. Their Hearers come already prepared with a good Liking to their Communion; one Point only is wanting to keep them fast, which is, that they be persuaded of the Honesty and Integrity of their Choice; a thing which we are all of us ready enough to fancy of our selves, and which I conceive 'tis not more natural for *Dissenters*, than for other Men, to find it in their Hearts to question.

AND now to conclude the Whole, and to declare plainly and in a few Words what the Truth in this Case is. If his Lordship had only said, That all Persons who have used their best Endeavours to know the Will of God, and have acted according to the best of their Knowledge, stand clear of Guilt before God, and shall not be condemned with the Ungodly: If he had said farther, That all those who believe in Jesus Christ, as the Redeemer of Mankind, and expect Salvation through him, may have comfortable Hopes from the Mercy and Goodness of God, that such Mistakes about the Sense of his Laws as they shall fall into through unavoidable Ignorance, especially in lesser Matters, shall not hereafter deprive them of the Rewards promised to those who keep his Commandments; he had said no more than what a wise and a reasonable Man ought to have said. These are Hopes, which, considering the Frailties and Infirmities of our Natures, by which we are all of us liable to Errors more or less, no Man should be so conceited of himself and his own Understanding, as not to be glad to lay hold of: and in this Way of stating the Case, I do assure his Lordship I am ready to go as far in Favour of Sincerely mistaken Men as himself, or any of his Friends. But the Fault lies in making Sincerity, *i. e.* mere Sincerity the DECLARED CONDITION, to which the Promises of God in Jesus Christ are annexed. This is the Doctrine which I have all this while been opposing; and the Consequences of it, I presume, already appear to be bad enough to justify me in so doing. One Consequence more there is worse than the rest in my Opinion, but for the sake of which perhaps it was, that his Lordship has taken so much Pains to defend it; which is, that it necessarily unhinges and subverts all Order and Discipline in the Church of Christ. This will be made appear in the next Section, where I am to treat of the Authority of the Church.

SECTION II.

Of CHURCH AUTHORITY.

CHAP. I.

Wherein is shewn in general, that the Pastors of the Church have a proper Authority over the Flock of Christ.

IN treating concerning the Authority of the Church, there are four Points principally to be consider'd, *viz.*

FIRST; Whether there be in the Church of Christ an Authority properly so called, and where it rests.

SECONDLY; Wherein this Authority particularly consists, and what are the Grounds and Reasons upon which it stands.

THIRDLY; How this Authority operates, and what Effect or Influence it hath upon the State or Condition of Men before God.

FOURTHLY; What Methods are most proper to be pursued by the Governors of the Church in the exercise of their Authority, in order to secure a true Christian Communion.

THESE Questions, I conceive, will take in all the material Points of Difference between his Lordship and the Committee. Now for the clearing of the first, it will be very necessary to state the Notion of AUTHORITY, which in a general Sense means neither more nor less, than such a Preeminence or Superiority of one Man above another, as that (under proper Circumstances) the WILL of that one shall be the RULE of another's Behaviour. He that rules must have a Right to prescribe or appoint; and the Prescriptions or Appointments made in vertue of this Right, must lay a direct Obligation upon the Consciences of those, to whom they are made or given. For Rule and Submission are Relatives, and there can be no Right to command on the one hand, where there is no Obligation to obey on the other. And herein it is that Authority differs from mere Advice or Counsel, which many times by Accident creates an Obligation, as it ministers unto us better Light, and furnishes us with more weighty Reasons for doing any thing than we had before. But in this Case the Obligation arises directly not from the Advice (which leaves a Man still to his own natural Liberty) but from the Considerations suggested by that Advice, which shew the thing to be fitting and reasonable; so that if we follow it not, we offend, not against the Person who advises, but against the Reason and Nature of Things. Whereas in all Authority properly so called, there must be a more direct Obligation, founded, not in any Considerations of this sort, but merely in the Will of the Person vested with Authority, which in many Cases will abridge us of our natural Liberty, and make it our Duty to be directed by his, rather than by our own, Judgment or Opinion.

THAT there is such Authority as this in the Church of Christ, and where it rests, I am now to shew. But there will be no occasion, nor indeed is there room, to treat of these two Points separately one from another; because the same

Arguments by which we gather, that there is such Authority, do also point out to us the Persons in whose Hands it is lodged, to wit, the MINISTERS or PASTORS of the Flock of Christ. This is the Point which I shall endeavour to make good; and in order to this let it be premis'd,

THAT the End of our Saviour's coming into the World was, that, having discharged the Office of a Prophet and Lawgiver, he might, through the al-fufficient Sacrifice of his Blood, reconcile us unto God, and admit us into a new Covenant of Mercy, promising the Reward of Eternal Life, which had been forfeited by Transgression, on Condition of new Obedience, *i. e.* of our Compliance with the Terms prescribed by him. Now the Things principally insisted upon in the Gospel as necessary to Salvation (we know) are Faith in him, and Obedience to the Law of everlasting Righteousness; which that they might the more effectually be secured, it pleased him, in Compliance with the Weakness and Infirmities of Flesh and Blood, to enact diverse positive Laws and Institutions, in vertue whereof, Christians might be visibly united into one orderly Body or Society of Men, separated or distinguished from the rest of Mankind. Of this Sort are the being baptized into his Name; partaking of the Sacrament of his most blessed Body and Blood; assembling our selves together in publick to worship him, to hear his Word, to pray to him both for our selves and for one another. All which is an effectual Means to keep up in our Minds a lively habitual Sense of what we believe and profess concerning him, which is the great Motive to Obedience; and withal helps us to render this Motive fruitful and operative, as it is the Method under which, by Christ's Appointment, we are to expect those Aids of his Holy Spirit, by which we are enabled *both to will and to do according to his good Pleasure.*

I SHALL not trouble you with the Proof of these Things, because, being verified almost in every Page of the New Testament, I have reason to presume that every Christian both understands and acknowledges them. Now the Case being thus, that it is the Will of Christ that all who believe in him should be thus gathered into one uniform Body or Society under him, the Question before us will amount to thus much and no more, *viz.* Whether he hath left all Believers upon the same foot of equality, to frame and support this Society by Rules agreed upon by common Consent among themselves; Or whether he hath appointed the Pastors of his Church as Overseers and Directors under him, with Power to order and dispose the whole, in such a Method as they shall judge to be most agreeable to the Laws of its Institution. If this latter be the Truth, you then see, not only that the Pastors of the Church have Authority, but also what Sort or Kind of Authority it is, to wit, an Authority directly and immediately Relative to outward and visible Communion. And that it is so, no Man can fail to discern, who is not less disposed to yield to Scripture Evidence than to his own Fancy and Invention. St. Paul, speaking of himself and the rest of his Brethren, Fellow-Labourers in the Gospel, says, *Let a Man so account of us as ὑπηρετὰς Χειρὸς καὶ οἰκονόμους Θεοῦ, as the MINISTERS of Christ, and STEWARDS of the Mysteries of God.* 1 Cor. 4. 1. And concerning a Bishop in general he says, that he *must be blameless as Θεὸς οἰκονόμος, as the STEWARD of God.* Tit. 1. 7. Now what the proper Notion of an Οἰκονόμος, or Steward is, we all of us understand, to wit, that he is one who has the Government and Direction of his Master's Family. And as such, is vested with Authority to order and controul the rest of his Fellow Servants. And under this Character our Lord plainly speaks of Peter and the rest of the Apostles, Luke 12. 42. *Who then is that faithful and wise STEWARD, whom his Lord shall make RULER over his Household to give them their Portion of Meat in due Season?* Now if you want to know what God's Household in Scripture Language means, you may learn it from St. Paul, who writing to the Church at Ephesus, saith, *Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and Pilgrims, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints and of the Household of God.*

I TAKE

I TAKE this to be a decisive Proof in general, that the ordering and governing the Church, consider'd as a visible Society, belongs to its Pastors. Accordingly the Pastors of the Church are spoken of in the Scripture, as those to whom the People owe OBEDIENCE and SUBMISSION. Πείθεσθε τοῖς ἡγούμενοις ὑμῶν καὶ ὑπαίχετε, says St. Paul, Heb. 13. 17. which Words are rightly translated, OBEY them that have the RULE over you, and SUBMIT your selves; and express that Kind of Behaviour which is due from Inferiors to Superiors, from those who are under Authority to those who are in Authority. There is undoubtedly an Authority in Magistrates over their Subjects; in Husbands over their Wives; in Parents over their Children; and in Masters over their Servants: And yet this Authority is no where enforced by any stronger Terms, than those which are here and elsewhere made use of to express that Distinction and Preeminence, which there is in the Pastors of the Church with respect to the Christian People. St. Paul speaking of the House of Stephanas, saith, I beseech you Brethren, ἵνα ὑμεῖς ὑποτάσσησθε τοῖς ποιήτοισι, καὶ παντὶ τῷ συνεργῶντι, that ye SUBMIT your selves to such, and to every one that helpeth us. 1 Cor. 16. 16. Now the very same Word is used elsewhere, to denote that Obedience which is due, 1st, From Subjects to Magistrates; as, ὑποτάγητε ἐν πάσῃ ἀνθρωπίνῃ κλίσει, Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man. 1 Pet. 2. 13. 2^{ly}, From Wives to Husbands, as, αἱ γυναῖκες ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσι, Wives be in Subjection to your own Husbands. Chap. 3. vers. 1. 3^{ly}, From Children to Parents; as, τὰ τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ, having his Children in subjection. 1 Tim. 3. 4. 4^{ly}, From Servants to Masters; as, δούλους ἰδίοις δεσπόταις ὑποτάσσει, exhort Servants to be obedient unto their own Masters. Tit. 2. 9. I do not pretend to argue from hence, that the Obedience that is due under all these several Relations, is, as to the Degree and Measure of it, exactly the same. For undoubtedly that Obedience which is due from Servants to Masters, is of a lower Kind than that which is due from Subjects to the Magistrate, and from Children towards their Parents; And the Submission which is due from the People towards their Pastors, may be the lowest of all, for any Thing that the bare Use of these Words will shew to the contrary. But what I argue from the Use of these Words (and rightly as I conceive) is, that in general there is an Authority belonging to the Pastoral Office; for why, if Pastors have no Authority, should they be spoken of in such Terms as convey the Image and Idea of Authority? You will say perhaps, that in the same Terms in which Christians are exhorted to submit to their Pastors, they are also exhorted to submit to one another. Thus Eph. 5. 21. ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Θεοῦ, submitting your selves to one another in the Fear of God. But what does the Apostle mean by this? Why not that every Christian should submit to every Christian, which is not Sense; but that every Christian should pay Submission every where, where Submission is due; and therefore he presently subjoins, Wives submit your selves to your own Husbands. — Children obey your Parents, and — Servants be obedient to them that are your Masters. The ὑποταγή therefore here spoken of, denotes a Submission to Authority; as it does likewise, 1 Pet. 5. 5. πάντες ἀλλήλοις ὑποτασσόμενοι, all of you be subject one to another, which is only a general Enforcement of the Particular Directions given in the foregoing Part of the Epistle, to wit, that we should submit our Selves to every Ordinance of Man; (Chap. 2. ver. 13.) That Servants should be subject to their Masters; (Vers. 18.) That Wives should be in Subjection to their Husbands; (Chap. 3. vers. 1.) And (which is very material to be taken Notice of in this Place) that the People should submit themselves to their Pastors: For thus stands the Precept (Chap. 5. vers. 5.) Ὁμοίως νεώτεροι ὑποτάγητε πρεσβυτέροις, Likewise ye YOUNGER submit your selves unto the ELDERS. The νεώτεροι here are not the Younger in Age, but the Younger with Respect to their Place and Station in the Church; that is, They are the whole Body of the Christian People, as appears evidently from the Opposition which they are made to bear to the πρεσβύτεροι spoken of just before, whose Office (as 'tis described Vers. 2.) was ποιμαίνειν τὸ ποίμνιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, to feed the Flock of God. This is a

Word importing Power and Authority, as every one knows who understands what ποιμένι λαῶν in *Homer* means, or who has read what we meet with, *Matt.* 2. 6. *For out of thee shall come a Governor ὃς ποιμανεῖ τὸν λαόν μου, who shall feed (or rule) my People Israel.*

BUT I shall not spend time in repeating what has heretofore been offered by much abler Hands, to shew the Force of these and such like Expressions, and withal to expose the Weakness of some Modern Criticks, who have taken much fruitless Pains to prove, that, in describing the Office of Christian Pastors, the Writers of the New Testament have made choice of soft and gentle Terms, on purpose as it were to caution us against supposing that there is any such thing, as Authority properly so called in the Church of Christ. There is certainly nothing solid in this Observation, the same Words being (for the most part at least) promiscuously applied to express both Civil and Oeconomical Authority, and the Pastoral Power. But why so, I ask, if the Pastoral Office has nothing to do with Authority? Or why are the Pastors of the Church ranked in the same Class with those to whom Authority unquestionably belongs, if Christ hath left them no other Power than merely to instruct and to persuade? It is clear from the Places already cited, that there is an ὑποταγή, or *Submission* due to Pastors by way of Eminency, or consider'd as distinguished from other Men. But to listen to Reason and Persuasion is at all times our Duty, whoever he be that offers to persuade us, and therefore if this be all that the Ministers of Christ have to do, there will be no other Submission due to them, than is common to the rest of Mankind. It will be to little purpose to alledge; that though we are always to listen to good Advice, there is yet a more special Regard due to the Pastors of the Church. For what is the special Regard, and upon what Bottom does it stand? Will you follow their Instructions? Not with a blind implicit Submission; nor indeed ought you. You will hear then what they have to say, and act according to what in vertue of the Reasons they shall offer, appears to be just and proper. But the same Deference is due to the Judgment of every body else; and if you consider the thing carefully, you will find that when once Pastors are stript of all Authority, whatever special Regard they may challenge, it will belong to them not under the Notion of Pastors, but as Men qualified by their Knowledge and Integrity to advise well; and to the Instructions of such a special Regard will always be due, whether they be Pastors or not Pastors. So that upon this Foot there can be no Foundation for any ὑποταγή, or *Submission* to Pastors, consider'd as distinguished from other Men. But there is one thing that ruins this Notion all at once, and that is, That the Scriptures mention Authority and Government, when distinguished from Instruction, as belonging to the Pastoral Office. Thus *1 Thess.* 5. 12. *I beseech you Brethren to know τῆς κοπιῶντας ἐν ὑμῖν, καὶ προϊσταμένης ὑμῶν ἐν κυρίῳ, καὶ νουθετοῦντας ὑμᾶς, those which labour among you, and are OVER you in the Lord, and admonish you.* It were absurd to imagine that the Apostle made use of so many Words only to express the Office of Instruction. Προΐστα is a Word importing Government, as every common Lexicon will tell you, and as you will be convinced by those Passages which I shall quickly produce. St. Paul writing to *Timothy* gives this Direction, *1 Epist.* 5. 17. *Let the Elders that RULE well (καλῶς προϊστάμενοι) be counted worthy of double Honour, μάλιστα οἱ κοπιῶντες ἐν λόγῳ καὶ διδασκαλίᾳ, ESPECIALLY those who labour in the Word and Doctrine.* This Passage carries with it so evident a Distinction, that it has been made use of to support the Modern Practice in some Churches, of admitting mere Laymen to govern the Church in Conjunction with its Pastors. But though this is a very wrong Use (because it is certain that there were no Lay-elders in those times) yet thus much seems clear, that there was a sort of ruling proper to the Pastors of the Church, that had no relation to labouring in the Word and Doctrine, i. e. to Instruction. For if ruling implied no more than instructing, there could be no Foundation for a greater or less Degree of Honour, than what arose from the different

different Degrees of Care and Industry, wherewith they applied themselves to the business of Instruction. But the Word *μαλιστα*, especially, evidently supposes another Reason, in vertue of which those who ruled well deserved double Honour, though not so much as on the account of their labouring in the Word and Doctrine. The Words then seem to me to bear this natural and obvious Meaning; *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double Honour, especially those among them who labour ALSO in the Word and Doctrine; Or, BUT THOSE MORE ESPECIALLY who labour in the Word and Doctrine.** For the understanding of which, you are to consider, that (according to the Usage of those Times) though every Branch of the Pastoral Office equally belonged to every Pastor of the same Rank and Quality; yet they did not exercise them all alike, but applied themselves more especially some to one thing and others to another, according as they were qualified either by their natural Endowments, or by the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost. To this Custom St. Paul refers, when he saith, *I was not sent to baptize, but to preach*: For though to baptize appertained to his Office, yet preaching was the Work to which he was more specially appointed. So Rom. 12. 4. & seq. *For as we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the same Office; so we being many are one Body in Christ.*—Having then Gifts differing according to the Grace that is given to us, whether Prophecy, let us Prophesie according to the Proportion of Faith; or Ministry, let us wait on our Ministering; or he that TEACHETH, on TEACHING;—he that RULETH, (ὁ προϊστάμενος) with Diligence. The same Point he pursues more at large, 1 Cor. 12. where having specified the Diversity of Gifts given to every Man to profit withal, he concludes with these Words, (Vers. 28.) *God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that Miracles, then Gifts of Healing, Helps, GOVERNMENTS, &c.* See you not here how constantly the Apostle distinguishes between the Office of Teaching, and that of Ruling, or Governing? But what Sense would there be in this if the Pastors of the Church had no Right to govern, any otherwise than as they had a Right to instruct, which every one knows is not to govern?

I MIGHT add, that those Directions which the Apostle gives concerning the Qualifications of a Bishop, do evidently shew that his Office carries with it Power and Authority; as in particular that which we meet with, 1 Tim. 3. 4. where he says, that a Bishop must be, *ὁ ἰδὺς οἶκον καλῶς διακείμενον*, one that ruleth well his own House, having his Children in subjection, adding this Reason, *For if a Man know not how to rule his own House, how shall he take Care of the Church of God?* In which Reasoning there will be no sort of Propriety, unless you suppose that Bishops have a Jurisdiction over the Church, some way answerable to that which they exercise as private Persons over their own Families. — But enough of this; especially considering that how obscure soever this Question may appear upon a general View, it will be found very clear when we come to open the Particulars, in which the Pastoral Authority consists. I shall only add, That the ascribing to the Pastors of the Church a proper Authority, carries with it no sort of Contradiction to those Places where they are forbidden, *κατεξουσιάζειν*, to exercise Authority, *κατακυριεύειν*, to exercise Dominion, or (as that Word is render'd by St. Peter) to be as Lords over God's Heritage. The true Sense of these Words will best appear, by considering the Scope and Tendency of those Passages where they occur; and at Mark 10. 42. you have them both; where we find that the two Sons of Zebedee, big with that common Mistake that Christ was come to reign as a Temporal Monarch, asked, that they might sit the one on his right Hand, and the other on his left in his Kingdom, i. e. that they might have the chief Places

* This Passage has been much vexed by Interpreters, which those who have leisure may consult, especially the learned Mr. Mede (Disc. 19.) who has mentioned four different ways of expounding it, to which he adds a fifth of his own. I thought it not worth while to set them down, because whoever will be at the pains to examine them, will find that some way or other they all enforce Authority.

of Authority under him. To which our Saviour replies; *They that rule over the Gentiles, κατακυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν, exercise Lordship over them, and their great ones κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν, exercise Authority upon them. But so it shall not be among you; But whosoever will be great among you shall be your Minister, and whosoever of you will be chiefest, shall be Servant of all.* Our Lord doth not here deny that there should be Governours in his Church; on the contrary, he plainly supposes that there should; for there were to be the *πρῶτοι* and the *μεγάλοι* among them as well as in earthly Kingdoms. And this he seems expressly to have told his Apostles upon another Occasion; *And I appoint you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, &c.* which Words will scarce be brought to any sound Sense, without supposing them to refer to that Authority, which they were to exercise in the Church under him, after that he should ascend into Heaven. But though our Saviour had appointed them a Kingdom, yet he here gives them to understand, that there would be nothing in it to court the Vanity and Ambition of Flesh and Blood; nothing like what they saw in the Kingdoms of this World, where Rulers had Authority over the Lives and Properties of their Subjects, whom they for the most part treated as their Possession and Merchandize, and ruled not with Meekness and a tender Concern for the Publick Good, but with arbitrary and despotic Sway, to gratify their own Covetousness and Worldly Views. But thus it was not to be with them, among whom *whosoever would be the chiefest must be the Servant of all*, by submitting to the lowest Offices and enduring the greatest Hardships for the Good of all. They were to be *Servants* I say, but in no other Sense, than he who was Lord of all was Servant, *who* (as it follows) *came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his Life a Ransom for many.* This is the plain Sense of the Passage; the short of which is, that the Pastoral Authority will not infer Temporal Dominion. And if this be the worst of it (as I conceive it is) we have no great Reason to be afraid of the Consequences.

CHAP. II.

Which shews wherein the Pastoral Authority particularly consists.

HAVING shewn in general, that there is an Authority lodged in the Pastors of the Church, we are next to consider in what this Authority particularly consists. I said before that in order to secure the great Ends of the Gospel, it was the Will of Christ that his Disciples, by the Observance of certain positive Laws by him appointed, should be visibly united into one Body or Society under Him. It will be proper therefore to observe, what Measures were taken by Christ and his Apostles, in erecting and supporting this new Society; in which if they proceeded upon the Foot of Authority, it will both appear that there is Authority in the Christian Church, and we shall likewise understand how far that Authority reaches.

To qualify Men to become Members of this Society, two Things then were necessary, *viz.* Faith and Repentance, and both these were to be provided for by the preaching of the Word. Accordingly the first Work our Saviour enter'd upon, was the opening his Commission, declaring and shewing himself to be the Messiah, and offering Terms of Acceptance and Reconciliation to all, who were disposed to receive them. By this means a small Number of Disciples being gathered together, the Foundation of this Society was at first laid; Christ at the Head acting as Supreme Director and his Disciples under him. But the Society was to be enlarged, and the Gospel to be preached in many Places, where it was not possible for him to attend in Person; what therefore could not be

be effected by him must be done by others in his Name. But did he leave all his Disciples under an equal Liberty to take this Office upon themselves, as they should find themselves disposed? Or did he impose it as an equal Burden upon all? Neither of these; but even out of this small Number he *chose Twelve*, and *sent them forth to preach*; (*Luke 16. 13. Matt. 10. 5.*) and when the *Harvest* grew greater and required more *Labourers*, he *appointed other Seventy also*. *Luke 10. 1.* Observe you not here a plain Distinction which destroys Equality? See you not that the preaching of the Gospel, which was a Work preparative only to visible Communion, was from the very first managed under Commission? And thus it was carried on by his Apostles after him. As Christ appointed them, so they appointed others to succeed them; nor can it be shewn from so much as one single Instance in Scripture, that any Person presumed to take upon himself the Office of a Preacher, who was not first authorized and commissioned thereunto, either by Christ immediately, or by those who acted as Ministers under him. The Reason of this Method must be obvious to any Man of common Understanding. For of whatever Consequence it is (and sure it is not small) that the Office of a Preacher be rightly discharged; of the same Consequence it is, that it be intrusted in the Hands of those only, who are duly qualified for it. Now of this Christ himself was certainly the best Judge; and so were his Apostles in their turns; and throughout the whole Course of the World it will be found true, that ordinarily none are so well able to determine concerning the Qualifications of Pastors, as Pastors themselves.

THE most plausible, and in truth the only seeming, Objection I can any where find in Scripture against this, occurs *Act. 8. 1.* Where we read, that *there was a great Persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the Regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles.* And it is said *Vers. 4.* that *they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the Word*; by which it may seem perhaps that the Work of preaching was in those Days lodged in the Hands of all Christians indifferently. But to this it has been answered, That the *ALL*, who are here said to have been *scattered*, must not be taken in a strict Sense, as if every Member of the Church of *Jerusalem* (the Apostles only excepted) fled from their Native Country at once, which is not credible; but may perhaps only mean the Deacons, and other Men of Note in the Church, who preached to the People, and consequently were most in Danger of Persecution, which always begun with the Ministers. But admitting that the *ALL*, who are here said to have been *scattered*, were to be understood as including every Christian without Distinction, how will it be proved that they, every one of them, took upon themselves the Office of preaching? *They that were scattered went every where preaching*, says the Text; *i. e.* They among them whose Office it was to preach, or who either in an ordinary or an extraordinary Way were commissioned to preach; This is all that the Words will necessarily inforce, or can in sound Reason be admitted. For in speaking of Numbers of Men, nothing is more common than to ascribe that to the whole, which belongs only to some of the chief and principal among them; and what Sense would there be in that Custom, of which we have so many Instances in the New Testament, of setting Men apart to the Ministry of the Word by special Authority, if it were a Thing which every Man had a Right to execute according to his Abilities, who should find himself so disposed?

But this is a Point which has been so fully clear'd by diverse Writers, that I think it perfectly needless to dwell any longer upon it; and therefore taking it for granted that the Pastoral Office is it self founded upon Authority, I will proceed to consider what farther Marks of Authority the Scriptures will afford, as belonging to those to whom this Office appertains. I have before shewn you in general, that the Scripture speaks of them as (*οἰκονόμοι*) the Stewards of Christ;

Christ; and upon a particular Survey it will I believe appear, that there is scarce an Instance of Authority proper to the Office of a Steward, which is not given to the Pastors of the Church. One Branch of the Authority of a Steward is to receive Servants into his Master's Family, and to turn them out again, if they be found unqualified. And this Kind of Authority belongs certainly to the Pastoral Office; Christ having committed it to the Care of his Ministers, both to admit Men into the outward and visible Communion of the Church, which is his Household, and to cut off from the same all whose Behaviour shall appear unworthy of their Profession. To this purpose I shall beg leave to set down that general Grant of our Lord to St. Peter, under the Quality of an Apostle, in which both Parts seem to be comprehended. *And I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven. Matt. 16. 19.* Which Words in general hold forth this plain and obvious Sense, That Christ would ratifie and confirm whatever should be done by him, in consequence of the Power signified by giving him *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* Thus far I think all Interpreters are agreed: But the great Question is, what this Power of the Keys means; and though this be a Point of some Difficulty, yet if we will interpret the Scriptures by themselves, without leaning too much to novel Conjectures, it may be settled perhaps with fewer Words than have commonly been made about it. At *Isaiah 22. 21, 22.* we have these Words concerning Eliakim the Son of Hilkiah: *I will cloath him with thy Robe, and strengthen him with thy Girdle, and I will commit thy GOVERNMENT into his Hand, and he shall be a Father to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the House of Judah: And the KEY of the House of David will I lay upon his Shoulder.* You see here plainly that the *Key of the House of David*, is a Phrase made use of to denote Authority, and (which is not improper to be taken Notice of) the Authority of a Subordinate Governour in the Kingdom of *Israel.* Why then should we not interpret the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, as signifying that Oeconomical Authority, which Peter, and with him the rest of the Apostles, were to exercise in the Church under the Gospel Dispensation? Is there any more proper Ensign of the Office of a Steward, than his having the Custody of the Keys of his Master's House? And does there not seem a peculiar Significancy in this Figure to denote the Privilege of admitting and excluding? Look but to *Matt. 18. 17, 18.* and you will find the Ratification on the part of Christ, which is here promised to the Exercise of the Power of the Keys, particularly applied to the Case of Excommunication. *If he shall neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen Man and a Publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* These are no light Circumstances to fix the Meaning of this otherwise obscure Passage. Other Interpretations have been thought of, but there are none which to me carry so great an Appearance of Probability as this. That of the Learned Dr. Lightfoot, which supposes the Grant of the Keys to St. Peter to import, that he should first open the Door of Faith to the Gentiles, is pure Conjecture without any Sort of Reason offer'd to support it; besides, it has this Exception against it, that it confines the Power of the Keys to St. Peter only, which is by no means just. Was it peculiar to St. Peter, *UPON this Rock will I build my Church?* No; for as we read, *Eph. 2. 20.* the Church is *built upon the Foundation of the APOSTLES and Prophets.* Was it peculiar to St. Peter, *WHATSOEVER thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, &c?* Nor this; for the same Promise is made to all the Apostles, *Matt. 18. 18.* as himself confesses. And why then must the Power of the Keys alone be peculiar to St. Peter? He has given no Reason, nor do I see any Reason that can be given. Parallel to these are those Words of our Saviour, *Joh. 20. 23.* which were spoken to all the Apostles. *Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* The ἀφίεναι and the κρατεῖν here, are the same with the δέω and λύω in St. Matthew, as the learned Grotius has observed. Now since

since the Gospel is *the Power of God unto Salvation*, by which *we obtain Remission of Sins*, in what so proper a Sense could the Apostles be said to have the Power of remitting and retaining Sins, as in this, That they had Authority, according as they found Men qualified or unqualified, of granting or refusing them Admittance into the Gospel Covenant, or the visible Church of Christ?— But I have no occasion to build upon obscure Passages. Let us consider both these Branches of Authority distinctly, and see what plainer Proofs may be found to shew, that it belongs to the Pastors of the Church.

THE Way of admitting or receiving Men as Members of the visible Church of Christ, we all know was the Sacrament of Baptism; the Administration of which was not left indifferently to all Christians, but granted by Commission to those very same Persons who were authorized to preach the Gospel. When St. Paul declares that he *was not sent to baptize, but to preach*, he plainly supposes that baptizing as well as preaching, was a Work for which a special Commission was necessary; which that it was lodged in the Hands of those, who were to preach the Gospel, is clear from those Words of our Saviour, *Go ye and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded you.* Matt. 28. 19, 20. Or as it is expressed, *Mark 16. 15, 16. Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature: He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.* But there is no need to be particular in this Case. Search the New Testament throughout, and this you will constantly find, that those who preached the Word always administered Baptism, nor is there that I can any where find, so much as one single Exception to the Contrary. The Reason of this is likewise plain; For since the Church of Christ was not open to all without Distinction, but to those only who were qualified by the Conditions set down in the Gospel; meet it was that proper Persons should be appointed to judge of these Qualifications, and to give or deny Admission, as the Persons who offered themselves should appear worthy or unworthy. And in whose Hands could this Trust be so securely lodged, as in the Hands of Pastors? Or who so fit to judge of Mens Qualifications according to the Gospel, as they whose peculiar Office and Employment it was to instruct them in the Law of the Gospel?

It is very true, that in the most early Ages of the Christian Church, there are not wanting Instances of Persons baptized by Lay Hands, whose Baptisms were nevertheless approved of as consistent with the Law of Christ, and agreeable to Order and Discipline. But it must be remember'd withal, that this was never admitted but in Cases of Necessity, which shews plainly enough that the Pastors of the Church always challenged the Office of baptizing, ordinarily at least, as their sole Right and Property. For how, if in this Case there was no Difference between Pastors and People, but one had as good a Right to baptize as the other, could the People have been confined in their Administrations to Cases of Necessity only? Or what Pretence can one Order of Men have to give Laws to another, in a Matter in which all are equally concerned? The Truth as I take it is this; That by the Gospel Institution, the Power of baptizing was lodged originally in the Pastors of the Church, and cannot therefore lawfully be executed but in Subordination to them. If Lay-men therefore do at any time baptize, it ought to be by their Permission and under their Direction, and thus far Baptism by whomsoever administered, will still be an Act of Pastoral Authority. In the Primitive Times it was thought reasonable to admit any Layman to baptize in Cases of necessity, upon which Foot such Baptisms may be justified; But not upon the Supposition which some are so fond of now adays, that every Christian in vertue of his own Baptism has, independently of the Pastors of the Church, a Right to baptize, which was a Notion unknown to the first Ages. If every Christian, as such has a Right to baptize, either in Cases of Necessity

sity or otherwise, 'tis plain that WOMEN have as good a Right as MEN. But this was never allowed in the Primitive Church even in the greatest Necessity; which shews evidently that the Authority of Lay-Baptisms in those Days, was understood to arise neither from any general Right, which Christians have in all Cases, nor *merely* from Necessity in particular Cases, but from the ALLOWANCE of the Church, which permitted to MEN for the sake of Necessity, what was denied to WOMEN, and what MIGHT have been (as it is now with us) denied to both, if it had been thought expedient. As to that Question whether when Lay-men do presume to baptize, not only without the Permission but against the Order of the Church, such Baptisms are valid or not valid, I have nothing to do with it. The Question only is, to whom the Authority of administering Baptism belongs. If you say it belongs to the Pastors of the Church, you give up the Point, and it can be no Exception against this, if it should nevertheless be maintained, that unauthorized Baptisms are valid. It appears to me that they were so esteemed in the Primitive Times; but those who defended them proceeded upon this Maxim, *Quod fieri non debet, factum valet*; which Plea supposes that though such Baptisms are valid, yet they are unlawfully administered, which is all that for the present I desire should be granted me.

To proceed then; As the Pastors of the Church have Authority from Christ to grant or refuse Admission into his Household, according as those who offer themselves shall appear worthy or unworthy; so when any one has been admitted, and shall afterwards shew a Behaviour unsuitable to his former Profession, they have Authority to turn him out again. This is what we call EXCOMMUNICATION, which signifies the shutting a Man out from the Fellowship of the Faithful; and concerning this Power the Evidence from Scripture is so very plain and strong, that it is now (I think) a determined Case, that it does somewhere or other subsist in the Church. The only Point at present seems to be this, *viz.* Whether it be lodged in the Pastors of the Church exclusive of all other Christians, or in the whole Society both of Pastors and People. But this Dispute would soon be at an End, if Men would consider either the Reason of the Thing, or the Words of the Original Grant before mentioned, or the Practice of the Apostles consequent upon it; which plainly shew that how much soever the People may be concerned in some circumstantial Matters, the Right of absolute and final Decision belongs to their Pastors. As to the first, since the same Qualifications which are required to make Men capable of being admitted Members of Christ's Church, are necessary to their Continuance in the same; common Sense will tell us that those who are the Judges in the one Case, ought to be so in the other: Nor can any thing be so agreeable to good Order and Discipline, as that they who have the Power to receive into Communion, should also have Authority to exclude from Communion. As to the second, It was to St. Peter under the Quality of an Apostle and Steward, that our Lord said, *And I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* It was to all the Apostles that he said, *Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* Finally; the Practice of the Apostles is clear and cannot be mistaken. St. Paul excommunicated Hymeneus and Alexander by his own Authority; For he speaks of himself in the singular Number; *I have delivered them unto Satan.* 1 Tim. 1. 20. He also desired the Excommunication of the Incestuous Person at Corinth by his own Authority; for he saith, ἡδὴ κέκρινα, *I have already judged, or determined—To deliver such a one to Satan.* 1 Cor. 5. 3.—5. It has been questioned I know of late (f) whether any thing can certainly be argued from the Proceedings of St. Paul and the Corinthian Church in this Case; And whether any Sort of EXCOMMUNICATION ordinarily practised either in this, or any other Churches, can be justified by

(f) *Answ. to the Representation.* p. 38.

it. But why so? Why an Apostle directing, the whole Congregation joining, and a bodily Punishment as a present miraculous Effect of the Sentence consequent upon it, cannot (it seems) be a Justification of the Ordinary Discipline of any Church. That is to say; because, for Instance, there is not an Apostle now alive to direct who shall be excommunicated; and because a present Miraculous Effect does not follow the Sentence of Excommunication, therefore Excommunication cannot be justified by this Instance! It was pity his Lordship did not proceed a little farther in this Way of reasoning, and say that the Person to be excommunicated was *Incestuous*, and the Persons directed to excommunicate him were *Corinthians*, and therefore that this Instance will justify Excommunication in no other Case but this, and that no where but at *Corinth*. The Practice of the Apostles is undoubtedly a sufficient Justification of a like Practice in the Pastors of the Church after them, in all Cases where the Reason of that Practice holds, and where there is nothing in the Nature of the Thing, which makes the immediate Direction of an Apostle necessary. Here then we have a plain Instance of an Apostle directing the Governours of a particular Church to pronounce a formal Sentence of Excommunication against a Notorious Offender, by which he should be adjudged as cut off from the Society or Fellowship of Christians. The Reason of this Practice is manifestly always the same; And the Nature of the Case is such, as does not require the immediate Direction of an Apostle, even in the Opinion of this Apostle himself. For, as I understand the second Verse of this Chapter, he taxes the *Corinthians* with Remissness in this Particular: *Ye, says he, are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this Deed might be taken away from among you.* The Thing it seems should have been done before; but seeing it had been neglected, he now takes the Affair into his own Hand, and passes himself a Peremptory Sentence to be published by them in the Congregation. This shews that the Apostle consider'd Excommunication as an ordinary Act of Authority in the Governours of the Church; or if any one can yet doubt, let him read those Directions to *Timothy* and *Titus*, one Bishop of *Ephesus* and the other of *Crete*; *Against an Elder receive not an ACCUSATION, but before two or three Witnesses.* 1 Tim. 5. 19. And, *A Man that is an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition, reject.* Tit. 3. 10. Do not these Passages very plainly represent the Bishops of the Church as ordinarily authorized to judge and censure Offenders? Besides, what can there be in the Nature of the Thing that necessarily requires the Direction of an Apostle? That a Man should deserve to be excommunicated, it is enough that he has openly violated the Laws of the Gospel, and upon proper Admonition refuses to be reformed; and of this who will say that the Apostles were the only Judges*? As to the Miraculous Effect which then followed the Sentence of Excommunication, it is nothing to the Purpose. For a Thing may in all Respects be the very same, though the Effects of it differ at different Times, and in different Places. And whereas his Lordship has mentioned a third Circumstance, to wit, *the whole Congregation joining*, I answer, that this Circumstance ever may concur, and (for ought that appears) always does concur with Excommunication as practised in all Churches, so far as it did concur in the Case of the Corinthian Church now before us. For it can never be proved from what is said here or elsewhere, that the Congregation were any farther concerned in Affairs of this Kind, than as Witnesses of the Sentence passed, which Custom has ever been and every where is observed unto this Day. But what if every Circumstantial Matter relating to Excommunication, and observed in our own or in other Churches, could not be justified? The worst Consequence that I can think of is, That our Laws about Excommunication ought to be mended; and should I say that in some Particulars it were much to be wished that they were, I presume no wise and good Man would find just Cause to be offended.

* See more of this, Chap. 6.

THUS much then I conceive we have already gained; to wit, that the Pastors of the Church, consider'd as distinguished from other Christians, have Authority to admit Men into Christ's Family, and to reject and exclude them from it. And having gone thus far in justifying their Character as οἰκονόμοι, or Stewards under Christ, I will ask no Man's Favour to allow me the rest. For what Sort of Stewards are those, who have no Power to dispense to their Fellow Servants their daily Food; and to settle all such Matters as concern the Order and good Oeconomy of the whole Household? Or how is it not absurd to suppose, that they, upon whose Authority the very Being of a Society depends, should have no Right to make such Appointments as are necessary to its well Being? But if you want farther Proof, it is ready at hand, the Providence of God having so ordered it, that there is no single Point of Authority which Reason suggests as appertaining to the Ministerial Function, which is not confirmed by expresse Warrant from Scripture. *Who then, says our Lord, is that faithful and wise Steward, whom his Lord shall make Ruler over his Household, to GIVE THEM THEIR PORTION OF MEAT in due Season? Luke 12. 42.* This shews it to be a Part of their Office to distribute the Spiritual Food, or (as St. Peter speaks) to FEED *the Flock of Christ*, which the very Notion of a Pastor implies. Now the Food of Christians is the Word of God, and the Participation of the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, which are the Means whereby we are both taught, and by the Succours of his Grace enabled, *to do the Will of our Father which is in Heaven.* Concerning the publick preaching of God's Word, you have already seen to whom it belongs; and as to the holy Sacrament, if you doubt whether the Right of administering it rests in the same Hands, you need only to look to the Institution it self, *Luke 22. 19. This do in Remembrance of me:* which Words were spoken by our Saviour to his Apostles ONLY, when *he blessed the Bread and distributed it* to them, and contain an expresse Precept that they should *go and do likewise.* You will say perhaps that private Christians are no where forbidden to administer the Eucharist one to another; and I shall answer as readily, neither was there any Need that they should. For in Things which in the Nature of them require the Direction of Authority, or ought not to be left to the Discretion of all Men promiscuously and at large, a Commission to some must ever be understood virtually to enforce a Prohibition upon others. Now that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is of this Kind is evident and undeniable; For this of all other Institutions of our Lord carries with it the most special Significancy to denote our Fellowship with Christ and with one another, and therefore cannot without the grossest Absurdity in the World be administered but to those, who have those Qualifications by which they may visibly appear to be his Disciples. Some then there must be to pass Judgment upon the Behaviour of Men, and to admit or repell them as they shall be found qualified or unqualified. And is this a Matter fit to be left to the Discretion of every Christian? No: Reason tells you it must belong peculiarly to those in whom the general Power of Judgment rests, that is, in the Pastors of the Church, who if (as has been shewn) they have *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, and can admit to, and exclude from, visible Communion, it will be a palpable Contradiction to say, that they have not Authority to grant or withhold the Use of an Institution which is the most solemn Mark or Token of visible Communion.

THESE Powers then must all of them stand or fall together; and you must either say that the Pastors of the Church have nothing to do with visible Communion, *i. e.* that they have no Sort of Authority to order and direct any Thing, which concerns the outward Oeconomy of Christ's Body, or you cannot deny them the Exercise of this Authority in reference to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, from which whosoever is debar'd, is thereby understood, for a time and in some Sort, to be cut off from the Society of Christians. The same Thing must be said of all other Matters of whatever Sort or Kind they

they be, in which the good Order of the Church is any way concerned. For (barring all special Reservations by the Master's Authority) the Office of a Steward reaches to all alike, and it is plain that in all these Cases, the Apostles not only exercised Authority themselves, but gave it in Charge to other Pastors to do the same, with respect to the Flocks committed to their Care. St. Paul in his first Epistle to Timothy gives several Directions pertinent to this Matter; as for Instance, That Women should not teach. (Chap. 2. vers. 12.) That Bishops and Deacons must be Husbands of one Wife. (Chap. 3. vers. 2, 12.) That Widows should not be taken into the Number of those who were to be provided for by the Church, under threescore Years old, &c. (Chap. 5. vers. 9.) Concerning the Maintenance of Elders, and the Number of Witnesses to be required in Case of Accusation. (Vers. 17, 19.) These are all Matters of Order, and the Rules here given were to be executed by Timothy in the Government of his Church at Ephesus. And doubtless it is concerning Things of this Sort that the same Apostle speaks, when he says to Titus, For this Cause left I thee in Crete, *ἵνα τὰ λείποντα ἐπιδιορθώσῃ*, that thou shouldst set in Order the things that are wanting. The *λείποντα* here must signify some less considerable Matters, not any Thing essential to the Being of a Church, for which it were unreasonable to suppose that the Apostle himself had not made a sufficient Provision. It will be an easy Matter for a Man to say, that these and such like Precepts concerning Matters of Order, are not given as Commands, but as Counsels or Directions of Advice; but it is no easy Matter to make this appear so much as probable. Read over these Epistles with an impartial Eye, and see whether they run in a Stile like that of an Equal to an Equal, or of a Superior to an Inferior. Besides, if you admit that the Pastors of the Church have Authority in the Cases before mentioned, it would be unreasonable to deny it them in such as these, and they may well expostulate with them in the Words of the Apostle upon another Occasion, *If the World shall be judged by us, are we unworthy to judge the smallest Matters?* 1 Cor. 6. 2. But the greatest Disputes of late have been concerning those Things, which relate to Order and Decency in the Publick Worship of God; Points which in their own Nature, seem so directly to fall under the Care of the Pastors of the Church, that it is wonderful to me that any reasonable Man should contend about it; especially considering St. Paul has so clearly decided this Question in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, where reprehending some Things that were amiss in their Publick Assemblies, and giving Rules concerning others, he concludes in the Style of one in Authority; *Πάντα ὡς οὕτως ὡς καὶ τὰ ἐξω γινέσθω*, Let all Things be done decently and in Order. Chap. 14. vers. 40. And *τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ ὡς ἐν ἔλθω διατάξομαι*, The rest will I set in Order when I come. Chap. 11. verse 34. I observed to you before, that his Lordship has taken some Pains to evade the Force of this plain Example. Once more hear him in his own Words. (g) St. Paul (says he) indeed speaks of Decency and Order in the Assemblies of Christians; but in what Points——it is worth while to consider. He exhorts the Christians in their Congregations, not to interrupt one another in their Preaching or Prophecy, but to speak one after another; without which restraint upon themselves, one End of their Assembling together would be wholly frustrated. This he tell us is THE Point to which the Apostle applied his Rule. It is very easy to see the Meaning of this Observation. His Lordship would have us believe that the Apostle speaks of Order, no farther than it is necessary to secure the End of Religious Assemblies; upon which foot it is plain enough, that the Points to which it refers cannot properly fall within the Reach of Ecclesiastical Authority. For whatever it be, without which the End of Publick Assemblies would be wholly frustrated, it must be supposed to be comprehended within that Law by which Publick Assemblies are enjoined, i. e. it must be strictly the Law of God; which the Law of Man may con-

(g) Ibid. p. 290.

firm but cannot alter. But there are some Things, which, though they are not necessary to secure the Ends of Publick Assemblies for God's Worship, do yet concern the Perfection of them, and may be consider'd as more or less decent and comely, and more or less conducive to Christian Edification. Concerning Matters of the first Sort, it is scarce possible for Men to differ; For it must be obvious to every Understanding what absolutely destroys the Ends of Publick Assemblies, and what does not. But concerning the latter, there is room for great Variety of Opinions. One Man may judge that to be decent, which another thinks unseemly; One may believe this particular Usage or Custom to be most for Edification, and another that. Yet in all these Things it is fitting that some settled Rules be laid down and observed, to avoid that Confusion and Incongruity which would arise, if every one were left to follow his own particular Sentiments. Will his Lordship now say, that the Apostle in this Discourse had no Regard to Matters of this kind? Why in Effect he has said it already, and I am very sorry for it. For he very well knows that it was but a Chapter or two before, that the Apostle gave Directions that *Men* should *pray with their Heads uncovered*, and that in this very Chapter he forbids *Women to speak in the Church*. Are these too some of those Points, without which the Ends of Publick Assemblies would be wholly frustrated? If you consider merely the End of Preaching, it wou'd perhaps be a hard Matter to assign a good Reason, why Women should be absolutely forbidden. Why then does the Apostle lay this Restraint upon them? Why he tells you expressly *αἰσχρὸν ἐστίν*, it is AN UNSEEMLY THING for a Woman to speak in the Church. Again; suppose a Man should *pray with his Head covered*; would his Prayers be therefore the less hearty and sincere? Why no; but *ὃ πρέπον ἐστίν*, it is not DECENT. These things being distinctly noted, the Apostle concludes his Discourse with this general Rule, *πάντα ὡςχημένως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν γινέσθω*, Let ALL THINGS be done decently and in Order. Now though I am none of those who will appeal to this Direction of St. Paul, to argue for Submission to EVERY THING ordered by frail Man for the Decency, Beauty, or outward Pomp of Circumstances relating to the Manner or Form of Worshipping God; yet I will venture to infer from hence, that in what Points soever the Rules of Order and Decency can take Place (and what Points are there where they cannot?) there Order and Decency are to be preserved. That the Pastors of the Church (frail as they are) are the proper Judges of what is orderly and decent in God's Worship; and that therefore Submission to their Injunctions ought to be urged, and that too in such a manner, as not to leave it to Mens own Judgments and Consciences, if by leaving it to Mens own Judgments and Consciences his Lordship means (as I suppose he does) leaving them absolutely at Liberty, whether they will comply or not, without having any Regard to their Authority. Otherwise St. Paul instead of saying, *the rest will I set in Order when I come*, would have said more properly, *The rest DO YE set in Order*, or *the rest WILL WE set in Order when we meet together*. This answers to his Lordship's Notions exactly, but very ill suits with the Apostle's, who understood his own Authority in these Cases, and therefore spake in another manner. Nor am I at all moved with what his Lordship farther alledges (on purpose to weaken the Force of this Argument) viz. That the Apostle does not speak of this Decency and Order, which was really necessary in their Assemblies, in the Manner in which he speaks of Righteousness and Holiness and all the Fruits of the Spirit; nor thunder out Excommunications or Denunciations of God's eternal Wrath against any who should transgress in this Point: For though 'tis true, that Matters of Order and Decency are of a Kind much Inferior to Moral Duties, I have not yet so learned Christ as to think any one Divine Precept to be beneath my Notice; And therefore be Rites and Ceremonies in Religion of ever so little Importance in themselves, yet if they be enjoined me in vertue of a general Law laid down in the Gospel, I shall (without looking for any particular Denunciation of God's Wrath) think it my Duty to comply with them; as knowing that those who out of a perverse and obstinate Spirit do refuse to comply with them, and thereby disturb the

Peace

Peace and Order of Christ's Church, are subject to all those general Denunciations which lie against those who break his Commandments. But to return.

I HAVE now laid open to you the principal Heads of the Pastoral Authority, as it was exercised by the Apostles at first, and by others commissioned by them in the Churches which they severally planted. Now lest it should be imagined that in the Exercise of these Powers, the Apostles and Apostolical Men acted not as ordinary, but as extraordinary Ministers in the Church, though the contrary is already plain enough, yet give me Leave to make these few general Observations concerning them; *viz.* 1. That these Powers have no Sort of Dependence upon those extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, which were peculiar to the first Ages. 2. That the Reason of them always continues the same. 3. That they were ever exercised by the Pastors of the Church in the best and purest Ages, when those extraordinary Gifts were either very rare or entirely ceased. These three Things put together will shew beyond Contradiction, that these Powers were intended for the standing Use and Benefit of the Church; and among the rest, the last Circumstance is not of the least Importance in the Case. For what surer Rule can you have, whereby to determine what ordinarily ought to be done, than to consider what ordinarily was done, when the Church subsisted in its greatest Simplicity? Were I disposed to transcribe what may be found in Antiquity, to support every Branch of this Authority, it would be an easy Matter to fill a Volume: But the Thing is quite needless. For that Antiquity is full against them, our Adversaries are very sensible, insomuch that to save themselves, they have been forced to give up those Primitive Champions of our Faith, whose Writings have hitherto been justly treated with Esteem and Veneration by all the World. To vilify and run down the Fathers, is now grown to be a Mode with some Sorts of Persons. The Policy of this is evident; for if they stand, themselves must fall. But the Modesty and good Sense of it is much of the same Stamp, as if, a Dispute now arising concerning the Interpretation of some ancient Statute, we should think it sufficient, if by any Sort of Artifice we could strain the Letter of the Law to favour our own Private Conceits, setting aside all the *Reports*, that have from time to time been made upon that Statute, as the Decisions of weak or designing Men. When a Law admits of divers Interpretations, the constant Practice of the Civil Courts in reference to that Law from the time in which it was made, has always been thought by wise Men a sure Rule by which to ascertain its Meaning. Supposing then, but not granting, that the Charter of the Pastoral Authority is, in the Letter of it, dubious; Pray why is not the constant Practice of the Church as good a Comment upon her Laws, as the Practice of the State is upon hers? What if we are grown so much wiser than our Forefathers, as to want none of their Instructions? Surely they may be allowed to stand as good Evidences of Affairs transacted within their own Times; or there is at once an End of all Historical Certainty. Nor let it be said, that though the Church was governed in this Manner at first, it will not follow that it must needs be governed in the same Manner for ever after. For what God has prescribed, what mortal Man shall presume to alter without Licence from him? What Allowances he may be pleased to make to those, who shall at any time ignorantly break in upon this Order, is no Part of the Question. The Point is, what is right and fitting for us to do? And the Answer is as plain; That which Christ hath appointed to be done. The Order was at first settled by himself, or by those who acted in his Name, and were under the Direction of his Spirit; and by appointing this one Way of governing his Church, he must be understood to have forbidden all others, since it doth not appear to be his Will, that it should at any time be changed. It is true, that in judging of Divine Laws as well as Human, Regard must be always had to the Condition of the World, and to the Reason upon which any Law was made; which if it ceases, it must be presumed to be the Will of the Lawgiver that the Law it self should cease likewise;

likewise; and upon this Foot diverse Customs which were in Use in the Apostles Times, are now wholly laid aside. But, as I hinted just now, there is in this Way of ordering and governing the Church, which I have now described, nothing which doth not suit with one Age as well as with another; no Reason for any Practice that doth not bind now as fast as it did at the Beginning; nor can there be any Reason hereafter to enforce a Change, but what must arise from the Perverseness of Men, who are fond of their own Inventions, and like their own Ways better than God's.

UPON the whole then, you may perceive that the Authority of Pastors in the Church corresponds with that of Magistrates in the State, with this Difference only, that whereas the latter are vested with coercive Power to enforce a Compliance with their Laws, the former are not; so it having seemed meet to our great and wise Lawgiver in establishing his Earthly Kingdom, not to interfere with the Kingdoms of the World, but as he found the Magistrate in Possession of the Sword, to leave him also in Possession of the Sword. But this Difference takes away nothing from the Pastoral Authority in other Respects. For Authority will not cease to be Authority, because the outward Means of supporting it are wanting. If the Magistrate himself had no coercive Power, his Authority to make Laws would be exactly the same: Offences would, for the present, be less dangerous, but not less culpable. The Reason is, because Authority, like all other Moral Powers, results from the Internal Habitude or Relation between Persons and Things, which cannot be affected or alter'd by any Thing merely external. Of this Sort is the Right of inflicting Penalties, which is so far from being essential to Authority, that it must always suppose Authority as its proper Foundation. For where there is not antecedently a Right to command, all Penalties enforcing Obedience are unjust and tyrannical.

How far the Ministers of Christ may, consistently with their Office, act as Ministers of the Civil Power, is a Point which at present does not fall directly under my Consideration. Thus much however it may be proper to observe in general, That since Christ hath no where forbidden them to exercise a temporal Jurisdiction, when it should be intrusted with them by proper Hands; And since (as will be shewn in another Treatise) no sooner does the Magistrate become Christian, than he is obliged, so far as the Affairs of his Government will admit, to encourage Christianity by Human Laws; there will certainly be nothing amiss, but a great deal praise worthy, if he shall think fit so far to arm the Pastors of the Church with Civil Authority, as may be necessary to give Weight to those wholesome Appointments, which through the Untractableness of Mens Tempers will otherwise be apt to be vilified and set at nought. In the first Ages when this Power was wanting, God himself was pleased sometimes to interpose and punish Offenders. To this St. Paul refers, when he speaks of *delivering* some *unto Satan for the Destruction of the Flesh*; by which is meant (as the Ancients understood it) the delivering them up to the Power of the Devil, who by the Permission and righteous Judgments of God was used on such Occasions to torment them with bodily Diseases. And where is the Absurdity, that God should now make that Provision in an ordinary Way, which heretofore he was pleased to make in an extraordinary? But the great Thing to be taken Notice of here is this, That Christ's Heavenly Kingdom being the End and Completion of his Earthly, the Rewards and Punishments of the Life to come are to be look'd upon as the Sanctions of his Laws, who though he will make all equitable Allowances for the innocent and unavoidable Errors of Men, will yet undoubtedly punish the Stubborn and Disobedient, and verify, to the sad Experience of those who shall be found guilty, what he told his Apostles from the Beginning, *He that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.* Luke 10. 16.

AND

AND thus much for the Particulars of the Pastoral Authority; If now you should ask, to what Class or Order of Pastors this Authority belongs, it will be enough to say in general, that all have a Share in it according to their respective Stations and Characters; but primarily and originally it rests in the Bishops, who under Christ are the Head and Fountain of all Spiritual Power; under whose Inspection and subject to whose Regulation, every Thing is administered in the Church, which is administered lawfully. You cannot but have observed, that in giving you this Account of Ecclesiastical Authority, I have described it to you according as it was left by Christ and his Apostles; And great Reason was there why I should do so, since the only true Way of coming at an exact Knowledge of that Power, which properly belongs to the Church, is to consider what Power she exercised, when stripped of all Foreign Supports, she subsisted of herself independent upon the Civil Magistrate. The same Authority which the Church had at the Beginning, the same she has now, and the same she will have unto the World's End; there being no Directions from Christ, that when Magistrates became Christians, the Pastors of the Church should give up their Charge into their Hands, nor is there any Reason in supposing that they should. This only must be granted, that since Christ gave this Power for the Edification of the Church, and since it is for the Good of the Church that she should receive Protection from the Magistrate; it must be always reasonable for her Pastors to yield to the Magistrate so much Interest in the Government of the Church, as is needful to render her capable of such Protection; which will of course suspend and limit the Exercise of the Pastoral Authority in many Particulars, but can take it away in none. When the Church and the State coalesce into one Body, it is a very clear Case that they must act in concert as one Body; and though where two distinct Powers are concerned, it will be a very hard Matter to avoid Encroachments on one side or the other, yet I think that Church-men will have little Cause to be uneasy, so long as Matters are carried on with due Regard to the Laws of Reason and the Gospel. But if it happens otherwise, and Magistrates instead of protecting the Church, should oppress and corrupt the Church, the Clergy, and in them over all and above all the Bishops (whose Character as Guardians and Overseers of Christ's Flock can never be extinguished) must understand the great Shepherd, to whom they must give an Account of their Charge, speaking to them as the Senate was wont to do to the Roman Consuls in Cases of Exigency, *Curent EPISCOPI ne quid ECCLESIA Detrimenti capiat*; And in such a Case (if there be no other Remedy) they are bound at all Hazards to take the whole Power back into their own Hands, and to exercise it in the same Independent Manner as they did from the Beginning.

CHAP. III.

Wherein is shewn, How the Pastoral Authority operates upon Mens Consciences; and how it affects their State and Condition before God.

HAVING shewn you in general, that the Pastors of the Church have Authority over the Flock of Christ, and also wherein that Authority particularly consists; I come now to the Third Point propounded, which was to consider, How this Authority operates upon Mens Consciences, and how it affects their State and Condition before God. Now as to the first, my Answer in general is, That the Pastoral Authority operates just as all other Human Authority operates, *i. e.* under proper Circumstances it binds to Obedience. Authority on the one Hand for ever implies an Obligation to Submission on the

other; and consequently if the Pastors of the Church have a Right to make Appointments relating to the outward Order and Oeconomy of Christ's Church, such Appointments must be considered as the Rule of the Behaviour of Private Christians in all Cases to which that Right extends. Thus for Instance; Since the Pastors of the Church have a Right to set others apart to the Work of the Ministry; the Consequence is that the People are to own and follow none as Teachers in the Congregation, but those whom they shall set over them: Since they have a Right to admit Men into, and exclude them from the visible Society of Christians; the People are by no Act of visible Communion to acknowledge any as Brethren, whom they shall not receive and acknowledge as such: Since they have a Right to administer the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood; the People must be bound to receive it from their Hands, and from the Hands of no other Person or Persons in Opposition to them: And finally, Since they have a Right to settle and determine all indifferent Matters relating to Publick Worship and Discipline; their Lawful Prescriptions in these Cases ought to be complied with, and not made to give way to the Humours and Conceits of Private Unauthorized Men. Yet all this must be understood with this Reserve, that no Man can be obliged to do any thing in consequence of any Order of the Church, which he himself after due Examination shall judge to be contrary to the Will of God, and the Original Laws of the Gospel; For *the Servant is not greater than his Lord, nor he that is sent than he that sent him. Joh. 13. 16.* An Authority derived from Christ must be exercised in Subordination to Christ, and therefore it is certain, that the Pastors of the Church can make no Laws in Opposition to His. Now this Limitation is as much a Rule to the People as it is to themselves; And where the one has no Right to command, the other can be under no Obligation to obey. It is all one in this Case, whether what the Pastors of the Church shall appoint, be really contrary to the Will of God, or whether it only appears to be so, in the Judgment or Opinion of those who undertake to consider it. For in judging of what is lawful or unlawful every one's own Conscience must be his Guide, and to maintain the contrary would be to run into that extreme (which is very justly complained of wherever it is found) of making the Pastoral Authority absolute. Now if you should pretend, that this Liberty takes away all Authority from the Pastors of the Church, you may say with just as much Sense and Reason, that it takes away all Authority from the Civil Magistrate; for all Authority in the World is and must be subject to the same Limitation. As Pastors govern in Subordination to Christ, so Magistrates rule in Subordination to God; and a King can no more oblige us to disobey God, than a Bishop. When a King therefore makes a Law, it must always be left to the Consciences of his Subjects to consider, whether it be agreeable to the Will of God or not, who if they think it not agreeable are certainly bound not to obey. All that he can do in this Case more than the Church can do, is to punish the Offender; But this, as I have observed before, makes no Difference. If this Liberty takes away all Authority, a mere coercive Power cannot give it back again; For a coercive Power gives no Authority, but always presupposes it. The Objection therefore, you see, lies full as strong against Civil Authority, as it does against Ecclesiastical, which is sufficient to shew that it is of no Weight against either.

To state this Point yet more clearly, let it be observed (what has been often hinted at before) that the Authority of Man to make new Laws can reach no farther than to Things indifferent, *i. e.* to Things not determined aforehand by the Law of God. Now the Consequence of this is plain and undeniable, to wit, that before Human Authority can possibly take Place, it must first of all be agreed what those Things are which the Law of God hath not determined. A Right to make Laws in indifferent Matters does by no means imply a Right to declare for others what Matters are indifferent; nor can any Authority

Civil

Civil or Ecclesiastical be extended so far, without usurping an unreasonable Dominion over the Consciences of Men, and destroying the Authority of God over his Creatures. Thus far therefore every Man must be left to judge for himself; but when it is once agreed that this or that Thing is by the Law of God left undetermined, and the Question only concerns the Fitness or Expediency of it in other Respects, then it is that Lawgivers have a Right to interpose, and Private Judgment must give way to Publick Authority. To those therefore who alledge that the giving to the Pastors of the Church a proper Authority, takes away the Liberty of Private Judgment, I answer freely, That in many Points so it does, and it is in the Nature of all Authority so to do. For an absolute Liberty to every Man to follow his own Judgment or Opinion, is no more consistent with Authority, than absolute Authority is consistent with any Liberty of Private Judgment at all. Where Authority begins, the Liberty of Private Judgment must needs have an End. But what then? If Human Authority never begins till the Law of God is at an End (which is the Case) your Conscience can never be hurt any other Way than by your Disobedience. For if Human Authority commands that only, which in your own Judgment and Conscience the Law of God hath not forbidden, how is it possible that your Obedience to Authority in this Case should infer a Breach of the Divine Law? Or how can your Conscience be hurt by obeying Man, when you may do it without offending God? But if under this Circumstance you disobey Authority, your Disobedience will certainly infer a Breach of God's Law; unless you will say, That notwithstanding God hath made us subject to Authority in Matters left undetermined by himself, it is nevertheless lawful in such Cases for every Man to do what is right in his own Eyes; which is a manifest Contradiction.

UPON the whole then you may perceive, that though the Pastoral Authority restrains the Liberty of Private Judgment, it restrains it in no Case in which Christ hath left that Liberty, *i. e.* in no Case in which his Supremacy is or can be any way infringed or hurt, and consequently that it is very absurdly urged that such an Authority is an Invasion of Christ's Prerogative. As to the other Branch of the present Inquiry, *viz.* How far the Pastoral Authority affects the State or Condition of Men before God, or in other Words, how far it is instrumental in bringing them under his Favour or his Wrath, it may likewise in part be resolved from what has been said. For since, as has been shewn, this Authority induces an Obligation upon the Consciences of Men, it is plain that just so much as this Obligation affects their State and Condition before God, just so much this Authority affects their State and Condition before God; And this Obligation does thus far affect the State and Condition of Men before God, as it is a Part of the Law of Obedience, which is the Rule of their Conduct here, and will be the Ground of their Justification or Condemnation hereafter. He that preaches the Word, and administers the Sacraments without Authority, or by any other Act invades the Pastoral Office, is a Sinner before God; and if he offends willingly is liable to his Wrath; but if sincerely and innocently, the Case will admit of the same Resolution with other Cases of the like Nature, concerning which having so largely spoken in the foregoing Part, there can be no Need for me to say any thing to it here. The same must be said of those who partake of the Ordinances of the Gospel, when dispensed by unauthorized Men. If they know, or might by due Care and Consideration understand, that hereby they offend against that Order which Christ has appointed in his Church, they are certainly guilty; if otherwise, they are in the Hands of God, and there it will be always best to leave them. But the great Question relates to the Exercise of the Power of the Keys, what Efficacy it has in receiving Men into or shutting them out from the Favour of God. To which I think the most true and proper Answer is, That strictly speaking it has none: For an Authority relative

to outward and visible Communion only (which the Pastoral Authority evidently is) can reach no farther than to outward and visible Communion. When the Pastors of the Church administer Baptism, or give the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, what follows? Why, by the one Act they admit, and by the other continue to acknowledge Men as Members of the visible Church of Christ. But whether their being and continuing to be Members of the visible Church of Christ shall or shall not avail them to Salvation or the Favour of God, is a Matter which hath no Sort of Dependence upon the Pastoral Authority, but rests intirely upon those inward Qualifications with which Human Authority can have nothing to do, I mean the Qualifications of Faith and Obedience. So likewise when a Man is denied Baptism, or lies under the Censures of the Church, the proper Effect of Authority is only this, that such a one is excluded or cut off from the outward and visible Society of Christians. But his being cut off from the Favour of God has no Dependency upon these Acts, but flows solely from those Crimes upon which these Acts are grounded, which had certainly shut him out from that Favour from the very Instant in which they were committed, and consequently before the Pastoral Authority could possibly have any room to operate. All this supposes the Sentence of the Church to proceed rightly; Let us but once admit an Error in her Decisions and the Case will appear yet more evident. A Person is desirous to be admitted or acknowledged as a Member of Christ's Church, and has all those Qualifications which are requisite in order to his being so. The Pastors of the Church through Mistake or otherwise, refuse him Admittance: I ask now; shall this Refusal prejudice such a one in the Sight of God? Not in the least; His Will shall be accepted of as if the Thing were done, and the Pastors will have it to answer for hereafter why they refused him. Yet still it must be allowed that such a Man is not within the Pale of Christ's visible Church, nor can be so till he is received by those who have Authority to receive him; and an Admittance of the contrary must end in the Destruction of all outward Order and Discipline. This shews then beyond all Exception the true Extent of the Pastoral Authority in this Case. It affects the State and Condition of Men with respect to the outward Privileges of Church-Communion, not with respect to those internal Privileges, by which they may be consider'd as qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven. This is what all (Protestants at least) agree in, how much soever they may differ in explaining themselves. For no one will pretend to say, that if Men are unworthily received it shall profit them, nor if they are unjustly rejected it shall hurt them; and so long as we agree in this, all other seeming Differences must end at last in such mere Contentions about Words, that it can be worth no Man's while to make himself a Party in them. It is common enough I know in writing or speaking upon this Question, to ascribe a certain spiritual Effect to the Censures of the Church when rightly and deservedly passed, and the Committee, as I have heretofore observed, seem to have done so. But the most that can be made of this Matter is, that by an usual Impropriety, that is spoken of as the Effect, which is only the Attendant upon Excommunication; which his Lordship ought I think to have been the less severe upon, because he himself is guilty of the very same Impropriety. He constantly supposes that the State of Christ's Subjects with respect to the Favour of God is affected by the Sentence of Christ. But strictly and properly it is not so; For in this Case as well as in the other it may and must be said, that the Cause of God's Favour or Anger is, not the Sentence of Christ, but that Behaviour of a Man, upon the Account of which that Sentence is pronounced by Christ. When Christ pronounces Sentence, the Man is either rewarded or punished according as the Sentence is. But it is plain that the proper immediate Cause of a Man's being either rewarded or punished, is the Favour or Anger of God; and this Favour or Anger is not at all founded upon the Sentence of Christ, but as I said, upon the Man's Behaviour. You see then that the State of Christians with respect to the Favour or Anger of God, receives no Manner of Alteration from the Sentence of Christ,

Christ, and consequently cannot properly be said to be affected by that Sentence. All that can be said is, that the Favour or Anger of God constantly attends upon the Sentence of Christ; so that those whom he adjudges to be worthy of Reward are in God's Favour, and shall certainly be rewarded; and those whom he adjudges worthy of Punishment are under his Wrath, and shall certainly be punished. With respect to the Sentence of Man it is not so, for this plain Reason, because they are fallible and may determine wrong, in which Case what Man pronounces, God will certainly reverse. But even here when the Church gives Sentence according to Truth and the Rules of the Gospel, that Sentence may be said to affect the State of Christ's Subjects with respect to the Favour of God, in as proper a Sense as the Sentence of Christ may be said to affect it; that is, God will ratify or confirm that Sentence, according to that Saying of our Saviour heretofore set down, *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven.*

C H A P. IV.

Wherein is shewn, what Methods are most proper to be pursued by the Governours of the Church in the Exercise of their Authority, in order to secure a true Christian Communion. And first of ARTICLES of SUBSCRIPTION.

WE are now come to the fourth and last of the Questions propounded, *viz.* What Methods are most proper to be pursued by the Governours of the Church, in order to secure a true Christian Communion. Now Christian Communion being as I have before observed, a Communion or Fellowship in the Faith of Christ, and in the Obedience of his Laws; it follows that whatever is proper to support and preserve Christianity in both these Respects, is proper to secure a true Christian Communion. The Means therefore of preserving Faith and Obedience being one and the same, the only Point which will arise upon this Head is, what must the Governours of the Church do, or in what Sort ought they to proceed in the Exercise of their Authority, so as best to secure and preserve the Christian Faith; And this is the Subject of the present Inquiry.

IN the first place then I think it will universally be granted, that the only adequate Means of Faith, and that by which Faith is immediately conveyed to the Mind, is INSTRUCTION. For *Faith cometh by hearing, i. e.* by Instruction; and therefore there can be no Faith where there is no Instruction. There is the same Relation between Revelation and Instruction, that there is between the Law of Nature and right Reason; for the Law of Nature is the Law of Reason, and therefore it supposeth Reason as the Means by which it is understood. In like manner Revelation is the Declaration of the Divine Will in certain Points, to the Practice or Profession of which we are not directed by Reason, which therefore supposeth the Testimony or Instruction of those by whom this Declaration is made. Now as Faith cometh by hearing, so *hearing* also cometh by the Word of God, *i. e.* through the Voice or Speech of God first declaring his own Will. For the Subject Matter of Revelation being the secret Will of God, 'tis plain that God's own immediate Declaration of himself must be the original Source of Instruction, and consequently the ultimate Foundation of Faith, which depends upon Instruction. But it is not needful that God should immediately reveal himself to all those to whom he purposeth that his Will should be made known; it is sufficient for this Purpose, if having once

revealed himself immediately, he appoints those to whom he has thus revealed himself (furnished with proper Credentials of their coming from him) to bear Testimony of this Revelation to the rest of Mankind. And after this Manner it pleased him that the Christian Revelation should be communicated and spread abroad. It was first delivered by Jesus Christ to *his Apostles whom he had chosen*, who being vested with extraordinary Powers, and having, after our Lord's Departure, received more full and ample Instructions from the Holy Spirit, under whose immediate Direction they were to continue throughout the whole Course of their Ministry, were commanded to *go into all the World and preach the Gospel to every Creature*. But the Apostles being mortal, could not always preach the Gospel in their own Persons, nor did it seem meet to the Divine Wisdom to continue a perpetual Succession of Men, intrusted with the same Powers, and favoured with the same Advantages; and therefore left Christianity, being left entirely to depend upon the Personal Teaching of uninspir'd Men, the very Name of it should in Process of Time have been forgotten, or its Doctrines corrupted, either through the Treachery or the Carelessness of those through whose Hands it was to come, it pleased God to provide us with his written Word, which, not being liable to the same Abuses, might be a standing Evidence to all Ages, what is the Faith that was *once delivered to the Saints*.

THE Scriptures then serving to us instead of the Word of God, *i. e.* instead of an immediate Divine Revelation, the main and principal Support of the Christian Faith must be, that the Study of them be duly encouraged. For these being the Test or Criterion, by which the Revelations of God are distinguished from the Inventions of Men; it is plain that the Christian Faith must more or less thrive or decay, proportionably as the Scriptures are more or less regarded. It ought therefore to be the first Care of the Governours of the Church, not only that the Scriptures be left open to all, but that all be exhorted to a serious and diligent Perusal of them; which will be a constant Check upon those who for worldly Ends may be disposed to corrupt the Faith, and also an effectual Means of exposing and bringing to open Light whatever Innovations either Wickedness or Ignorance may at any time have brought into the Church. But although this be necessary, yet it is not alone sufficient; for 'tis easy to judge by what we every Day experience, that were the Scriptures only laid open to all, and every Man left to pick out his Religion as he was able, and should find himself disposed; such is the Stupidity of some, such the Carelessness and Inconsiderateness of others; that very few, comparatively speaking, would attain to a competent Understanding of the Things that pertain to Salvation. This makes it to be the Duty of every Pastor of the Church to instruct the Ignorant, and to awaken the Careless and Negligent, that neither the one may be lost through their own Wantonness, nor the other *wrest the Scriptures to their own Destruction*. Now this being the Case, it must be evident to any Man of common Understanding, that in order to the Preservation of the Christian Faith, it is highly expedient, and even necessary, that the Work of Instruction be committed to proper Hands. That none be called (so far as is possible) to the sacred Ministry of the Gospel, but those who are skilful in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. None but those who (in the Apostle's Phrase) are *Workmen, that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth, and able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and convince Gainsayers*. Nor is it less obvious to understand, that the only possible Way to secure this great Point, will be for those whose Office it is to appoint Men to the Work of the Ministry, to make a diligent Inquiry into the Faith of those who shall at any time offer themselves, and either to admit or reject them as the Faith which they profess is agreeable or not agreeable to the Faith of the Gospel.

THUS

THUS much I conceive will in general or in the gross be easily allowed me. But the main Point is, how far and in what Manner it is lawful and proper for the Governors of the Church to inquire into the Faith of those who offer themselves for Holy Orders. Some there are who have declared themselves universally against all Human Explications, as thinking that no higher Security ought to be required in this Case, than that the Person testifies his Assent to the Scriptures in general as the Word of God, with his Resolution not to teach or publish any other Doctrines, but such as after the best and most impartial Inquiry he shall judge to be agreeable to the same. Or (which comes exactly to the same thing) that the particular Doctrines of the Scripture be propounded and consented to in the same Words, and in no other than those in which they are delivered in the Holy Scriptures. Now were this Article, *the Scriptures are the Word of God*, the only thing which constitutes the Faith of a Christian; the Method I own were not to be found Fault with. For that Faith which is sufficient to qualify Men for Eternal Salvation, is undoubtedly sufficient to qualify them for the Ministerial Office. But this is plainly not the Case. For what do we mean when we say that the Scriptures are the Word of God? Why, as I have shewn, we can mean no more, than that the Scriptures do contain or are the Evidence of God's Word, *i. e.* of those Truths which God hath revealed. The Scriptures therefore stand in the same relation to us that the personal preaching of Christ and his Apostles stood in to the first Believers; so that if to believe that the Scriptures are the Word of God be now the Christian Faith, the receiving Christ and his Apostles as sent from God, must then have been the Christian Faith, and so the Christian Faith must be something different now from what it was at the Beginning. But it is evident to common Sense, that neither the one nor the other was or is the Christian Faith. The Christian Faith is the same now that it ever was, to wit, the Truths or Doctrines relating to the Salvation of Men by Jesus Christ; of which the preaching of Christ and his Apostles was at first, and the Holy Scriptures are now the Declaration only. So that as at first it would have been a vain thing to have received Christ and his Apostles as Teachers sent from God, without receiving that Message which they delivered; so also it signifies as little now to receive the Scriptures as the Word of God, without receiving the Doctrines contained in the Scriptures; for the setting forth or declaring of which the Scriptures were given us. Now this a Man may not do, though he assents to every Proposition contained in the Scriptures, in those Words in which they are delivered in the Scriptures. For such an Assent as this implies no more, nor is it supposed to imply any more, than that a Man believes every Proposition contained in the Scriptures in some Sense to be true. But this can be no Evidence that a Man believes the Doctrines of the Gospel, or that he embraces the Christian Faith. For the Doctrines of the Gospel are not any Sense indifferently affixed to the Words of Scripture; but that precise, determinate Meaning which was signified or intended by the sacred Writers.

It seems necessary then, in order to the Preservation of the Christian Faith, that those with whom the Publick Ministry of the Word is to be intrusted, do not only give their Assent to the Scriptures in general as the Word of God; but also that in Case any Article of Faith be expressed in such Terms as are liable to be perverted to a Sense which the sacred Writers never intended (and especially if it be found that they actually are so perverted by many) it is necessary, I say, in such a Case that the true Sense of those Terms be set forth, and an Assent to them in that Sense be required as the Test or Evidence of a due Qualification. To represent those who plead for this Method, as if they were (g) desirous to *impose* upon others *the Inventions of Men* for, or instead of

(g) See the Bishop of Bangor's Postscript, in Answer to the Bishop of Oxford's Charge, p. 248, 249.

the Precepts of God, is absurd and scandalous; for he who requires a Man's Assent to an Explication of certain Scripture Terms, as a Qualification for his Admittance into the Ministry, does not thereby impose that Sense upon him, as I shall shew very fully by and by; and methinks it is but a very small Demand if we ask so much Charity as to have it believed, that whatever Explications of Scripture we propound, we propound them under a Notion, or upon Supposition at least, that they are true Explications. Now a true Explication of Scripture Words, though it be a Human Explication, *i. e.* an Explication made or given by Man, yet it is not a Human Invention, but a Divine Truth; and if a Man through Mistake propounds a false Interpretation instead of the true one, though this indeed is in Fact propounding a Human Invention, yet it is every whit as unjust to charge him with a Desire of substituting Human Inventions instead of Divine Truths, as it would be to charge him with a Desire of ruining his Country, because through Mistake he pursues such Measures of Policy as are indeed (though contrary to his Intention) destructive to the Publick Security. That therefore, and that only, which can truly be said, is this, that we are for rescuing the Word of God from the Abuses of Men; that we are for putting the Ministerial Function into the Hands of those who are sound in the Faith, and excluding those from that Office who, through their Unskilfulness in the Scriptures, are disposed to publish their own Inventions, or the Inventions of others, instead of the Precepts of God. This we are ready to acknowledge, and if there be any Fault in it, let it be shewn where it is. But it can never be shewn where it is of any consequence that the Ministers of the Gospel teach the Doctrines of the Gospel; nor can the Means proposed be thought either improper or unnecessary, till it can be proved that the Faith of the Gospel lies not in one determinate Sense of Scripture Words, but in any Sense that the weakest and most careless Reader may think fit to put upon them.

I would not have the Reader suspect that I am all this while confuting an Imagination of my own. For so indeed it is, that the Right Reverend Prelate, to whom I refer, seems to be of Opinion that there can be no such thing as altering the Words of Scripture, without altering the Doctrines of the Scripture, and thereupon has most plentifully inveighed against ALL Human Explications, without Distinction, as Human Inventions. A few Passages out of many will satisfy you. *(b)* *This, says he, is the very same insupportable Evil which the Romanists charge upon the Protestants making the Rule of Faith to be contained in the Bible only. They and the Bishop seem to have the same bad Opinion of this Method, and of the terrible Evil of NOT ADDING HUMAN WORDS to explain and support the DIVINE.* Where you see, that the adding Human Words to explain the Divine is opposed to the making the Bible the only Rule of Faith, and consequently it is supposed that the one is inconsistent with the other. Again, *(i)* *If the Bishop will only contend for those Doctrines which have been always firmly believed—he will have no Adversaries. But if he means by DOCTRINES the PHILOSOPHICAL EXPLICATIONS OF MEN—he does but abuse, &c.* Here again you must observe, that the Doctrines of the Gospel are distinguished universally from Human Explications; for if you think he lays any Stress upon the Word Philosophical, you will find your Mistake by what follows in the same Page; *If there be no room for INVENTION in RELIGION, as the Bishop contends—let him shew what room there is for—INVENTED WORDS, under pretence of EXPLAINING Doctrines better, and fixing them more certainly than the ORIGINAL WORDS of Christ and his Apostles could do.* So that it seems whoever makes Use of new or unscriptural Words, for the better fixing or explaining the Sense of Scripture Doctrines, does nothing less than invent a new Religion!

(b) Ibid. p. 338.

(i) Ibid. p. 263, 264.

Lastly, his Lordship joins Issue with the Bishop of Oxford upon this, that (k) *the meanest Believer ought not to be excluded from Communion, who desires to embrace it on the Terms which God has prescribed*; and hereupon argues for several Pages together, that therefore there ought to be no Human Decisions, *i. e.* Human Explications, laid down as the Rule of admitting Men to, or excluding them from Communion, because this is requiring other Terms than what God has prescribed.

Now his Lordship is not in earnest in what he says, or else it must be said; that in the Bishop's Opinion whoever alters the Words of the Scripture, must at the same time alter the Doctrines of the Scripture. For if the Words of Scripture may be altered, and yet the Doctrines remain the same; then 'tis plain that Human Decisions MAY be laid down as the Rule of admitting Men to, and excluding them from Communion, and yet no other Terms of Communion be required than those which God has prescribed; new Words MAY be made Use of to fix and explain Scripture Doctrines, without inventing a new Religion; and the Bible MAY still be the only Rule of Faith, although Human Words be added to explain the Divine. But if the Case be otherwise, we will allow that ALL Human Explications universally are and must be Human Inventions. But his Lordship, I hope, will be well advised before he ventures openly and directly to maintain a Notion so absurd, so contradictory to the common Sense of Mankind. If the Scripture has any Meaning at all (and his Lordship, I trust, will not say it has none) that Meaning may be expressed by a Variety of Words; and if this Meaning be (as undoubtedly it is) that which constitutes the Scripture Doctrine, is it not plain and undeniable, that he who teaches this Meaning, teaches the Scripture Doctrine, though he useth not the Scripture Words or Phrases? If not, surely the Ministers of the Gospel are *of all Men the most miserable*! They are bound by their Office to instruct the People committed to their Charge out of God's Holy Word, both publickly and privately, as Occasion shall require. Instruct always they cannot, if they confine themselves always to Scripture Terms; yet if they alter the Words of Scripture, they become it seems the Preachers of a new Gospel, and substitute their own Inventions instead of the Precepts of God! His Lordship may be pleased to make this his own Case, and ask himself how he should like, after he has been making a grave and painful Discourse from the Pulpit, to have it told him, that he has all this while been publishing his own Inventions; that he hath been leading his Flock from the Bible, as the only Rule of Faith, and laying down other Terms of Salvation than those which God hath prescribed. If his Lordship doth at any time undertake to explain the Scriptures; if he doth not always treat of Scripture Doctrines in the same Words, and no other than those in which they are delivered in the Scriptures (which I presume he doth not) this Charge is evidently as good as his; and if he could bear it with Patience his Parishes would have reason to complain that he had used them ill. But if not, let him consider how just he has been to his very worthy and learned Adversary, and to all those who accompany him in the same Path of good Sense, in casting the same Reproach upon them, for no other reason than because they plead for that which he himself practises, and which all Ministers of the Gospel must upon some Occasions be obliged to practise, if they will be true to their Trust, and not leave Men in the Dark, as to those Points in which it may be most of all necessary for them to be rightly instructed.

HIS Lordship, I hope, will not think of excusing himself by saying that he is not against Human Explications in the gross, but only against making them Tests of Mens Qualifications for the Ministerial Office, or the Communion of

(k) *Ibid.* p. 250.

the Church. This, I know, is that thing which displeaseth him; but Principles are untoward things, and will not infer just as much or as little as a Man has a mind they should infer. If we must not make Human Explications the Tests of Mens Qualifications, &c. for this reason, because they are Human Inventions; for the same reason they ought universally to be laid aside; for Human Inventions ought certainly never to be substituted in the room of the Precepts of God. A Man must not frame a new Religion to himself, nor must he so much as endeavour to persuade another to embrace a new Religion, for *he that preacheth another Gospel let him be accursed*. And yet, if you will believe the Bishop, this is more or less the Case of every one who (l) *divests* (as he is pleased to speak) *the Word of God of that Generality of Expression in which it pleased him to leave it; i.e.* who in Case any Scripture Proposition be capable of more Senses than one, limits it to one particular Sense, adding Human Words to explain the Divine. The true Consequence of which is, that amongst the Variety of Senses in which any Scripture Proposition may possibly be interpreted, it is a very wicked thing for a Man by the Help of his Understanding, either for his own Private Satisfaction, or for the Instruction of his Neighbour, to endeavour to determine which is the right one; for he who thus determines doth certainly divest the Word of God of that Generality of Expression in which he hath left it (in the same Sense in which the Governours of the Church can be said to divest it, when they propound their own Explications as the Test of Mens Qualifications) and adds Human Words to explain the Divine. Our Saviour, for instance, has commanded us to be baptized with Water, and to eat Bread and drink Wine in Remembrance of him; but he hath not expressly told us whether these Commands are to be understood literally or mystically, and therefore to determine either the one way or the other, is to divest the Word of God of that Generality of Expression in which he hath left it. Again, We are commanded in Scripture to *obey them that have the Rule over us*; but there are no Scripture Words which tell us whether Ruling here signifies governing with Authority, or leading by Instruction and Persuasion; and consequently to contend either for Authority or no Authority, is likewise to divest the Word of God of that Generality of Expression in which he hath left it. Once more, The Scripture tells us that *the WORD was God*; but we are not told in so many Words whether the Word *God* signifies the one supreme Being, or a subordinate, inferior Being; therefore again to say, either that the WORD is the supreme Being, or that he is not the supreme Being, is to divest the Word of God of that Generality of Expression in which he hath left it. And what is the Consequence of this? Why, according to his Lordship, that the Church of *England* and the Quakers; the Church of *England* and the Independents; the Orthodox and the Arians, are ALL the Inventors of a new Religion, and the Setters up (each in Opposition to the other) of their own Inventions instead of the Precepts of God. Was it not time, think you, for his Lordship to call out——But he should have taken Care himself not to have been of the Number of these Inventors. He should have espoused neither the one nor the other of the different Sects or Parties amongst those who are called Christians, but have told the World plainly, that the Scriptures, as to all those Points about which those who equally hold them to be the Word of God, do differ among themselves, are (what it seems he would be loath that any one should suppose the Writings of Mr. *Chillingworth* to be) (m) *an empty, fruitless, dead Letter*; and I will add, with a proper Variation, the Triumph of Atheists, and the Refuse of Booksellers Shops. That in consequence of this Principle he would be neither Independent, nor Arian, nor Churchman, nor any thing but a Publisher of universal Schemes; a Defender of the common Rights of Subjects; an Assertor of that noble Privilege which every Christian has to judge

(l) *Ibid.* p. 233.(m) *Ibid.* p. 242.

for himself, and make the BEST of his Bible; *i. e.* (for this is the best and only Purpose the Bible can serve to upon his Principles) to see for himself; and to pronounce the Words of Scripture with his Mouth; and of the indispensable Obligation he is under to make no Sense of them when he has done. This is the Part which the Bishop should have acted, if he had a Mind to have been consistent with himself. For how many Senses soever the Words of Scripture are capable of, 'tis certain that the true Sense can be but one; and to determine this Sense, his Lordship tells us, is to substitute our own Inventions instead of the Precepts of God. But instead of this, his Lordship hath not only made himself the Head of a Party in Opposition to the Establish'd Church, but sets forth himself, and his Friends the Arians, as the Finders out of old original Doctrines. (*n*) If, says he, *to become the Author of NEW HYPOTHESES in Religion, or to call in Question those Doctrines which have been always believed by all, be so great a Crime; then certainly they ought to be praised, and not reproached, who endeavour to set Men in the ONLY WAY OF FINDING OUT what the OLD ORIGINAL DOCTRINES of Christianity, believed even in the most early Ages, were.* What is this which his Lordship and these worthy Gentlemen are going to do! Are they about to set Men in the Way how to read! I hope we have Schoolmasters enough for that Purpose. But this is not the Case; they are endeavouring, says the Bishop, to set Men in the only Way of finding out (not old original WORDS, but) old original DOCTRINES, in Opposition (not to new WORDS, but) to new HYPOTHESES in Religion. So that it seems they are going to set Men in the only Way of finding out the Sense of old Words, and to rescue them from the Abuses that have been put upon them by new Hypotheses. The Design would be commendable without doubt if the World needed such Instructors. But how will they effect it? By sending Men barely to these old Words? This will not do. For it is supposed that these old Words are already perverted by new Hypotheses. There is a Necessity therefore that in this only Way the Bishop speaks of, there be an Use or Application of other Words; and the Sense expressed by these other Words must be what he means by the old original Doctrines. The Catholick Cause does not want, and I trust in God it never will want Advocates equal to the Weight of it. What I remark is, that we have here a very plain Confession from his Lordship, that Human Explications (provided always that they be his own) are not Human Inventions, but old original Doctrines.

HAD this Reasoning come from any other Person but his Lordship, I should not have bestowed thus much Time in exposing it. But that which in a less considerable Writer ought to have been treated with Contempt, calls for other Resentments when it comes from one from whom better things might have been expected. If his Lordship had only said, that SOME Human Explications of Scripture Words are Human Inventions, he had said a very great and lamentable Truth, of which he and his Friends have afforded us too many Instances; but to represent Human Explications INDEFINITELY, or without Distinction, as Human Inventions, is such a Contradiction to the Nature and Reason of Things, that the Bishop himself, you see, was not able to stand the Shock of it; nor can I imagine what should lead him to this Way of arguing, but this, that otherwise he must either have entered into the Merits of a Cause, which, how fond soever he may be of it, he does not think it convenient openly to defend, or else have made it evident to the meanest Reader, that all he had to say from the Topick of Human Inventions was nothing to the Purpose.

AND now to bring the Reader back to the main Point: It is certain that

(*n*) *Ibid.* p. 263.

false Explications of the Words of Scripture, and these only, are Human Inventions. That when any Article of Faith is delivered in such Terms as are capable of various Senses, there must be an Application of the Reason of Man; conducted by the ordinary Rules of Criticism, to find out which is the true. That this true Sense, as distinguished from all other Interpretations, is the Gospel Doctrine; and consequently, that if it be necessary to provide as much as may be, that the Ministers of the Gospel do teach the Doctrines of the Gospel, it must be necessary that the Governours of the Church do require the Assent of those who shall offer themselves as Candidates for Holy Orders, to such an Article in that Sense, as the Test or Evidence of a due Qualification. I am now therefore led to this material Question, Who is to judge of the true Sense of the Scriptures, or when any Article of Faith is rightly explained? And the Answer is ready, *viz.* That they are to be the Judges in this Case, whose Office it is to appoint Men to the Ministry. For to say that any one has a Power to reject Men from the Work of the Ministry for Want of a proper Qualification, and yet that he has no Power to determine what is a proper Qualification, is to assert a Power, and deny it at the same time. Now the Qualification concerning which the present Inquiry is, is whether a Man holds the Faith of the Gospel; and by Consequence if those whose Office it is to appoint Men to the Work of the Ministry, have not a Power to determine what is the Faith of the Gospel, they have no Power to determine what is a proper Qualification. They must therefore of Necessity be vested with such a Power; which Power is so far from interfering with that Liberty of Private Judgment, which of late has been so importunately, and (in my Opinion) so needlessly contended for, that in truth it entirely depends upon it. For it is to be observed, that when in this Case we speak of a Right to determine what is the true Sense of any Article of Faith, we do not propose the Explication given in virtue of this Right, as a Rule for the Faith or Conduct of Christians; but only as a Rule, according to which they shall either be admitted or not admitted to officiate as Publick Ministers, which every one who has Sense must see are very distinct Things. Of his own Faith and Conduct every one's own Judgment is, and must be the Rule. A Man is not bound to believe, nor indeed is it in his Power to believe otherwise than his own Reason directs him; nor ought he to do any thing merely because another Man tells him that it is right and fitting, but because he judges it to be so himself. All this is granted; and therefore it is allowed that no Human Explication of Scripture can or ought to be received any farther than those to whom it is propounded shall think it reasonable to receive it. But if a Man's own Judgment is to be the Rule of his own Faith and Conduct; if his own Reason must direct him what he is to believe and practise as a Christian; it will be ridiculous either to infer or suppose that he is to be the Judge whether he be qualified to minister as a Publick Teacher; nor can any Man stay to inquire who is to be the Judge, who will but be so equitable as to allow to his Superiors the same Liberty which he claims to himself. He who appoints Men to officiate as Publick Teachers, acts in virtue of a Trust reposed in him. The Discharge of this Trust therefore is to be considered as a Part of his Conduct. If then his own Judgment is to be the Rule of his own Conduct, 'tis plain that he ought to admit none to this Office, but those whom he shall judge to be duly qualified, *i. e.* none but those who agree with him in the Profession of that which he verily believes to be the true Christian Faith; and it would be an unpardonable Treachery to God, if instead of being scrupulous in this Matter, he should commit the keeping of the Faith to those, whom (according to the best of his own Judgment) he knows, or has Reason to suspect, are ready to subvert the Faith; to those, who if they will be just to God and themselves, must in Consequence of the Commission granted by him, be obliged, as it were virtually for him, to teach such Doctrines as he believes to be contrary to God's Word, and such therefore as he dares not teach himself, or with his own Mouth.

I HAVE said thus much because the great Clamour that has of late been raised against ARTICLES of SUBSCRIPTION (which indeed are nothing but so many Human Explications of some particular Parts of Scripture liable to be abused) is this, that it destroys the Liberty of Private Judgment; which may be particularly exemplified in the Writer above mentioned, who it seems can see no Medium between throwing aside ALL Human Decisions, and (o) SUCH an AUTHORITY to make Human Decisions as shall bind Men to comply with those Decisions, without allowing a Right of examining them by the Scriptures, and of being guided by their own Judgment, in their Compliance or Non-compliance with them. But surely his Lordship never well considered the Subject he was writing about; for it is as clear as any thing can be, that Human Decisions, or (for you may call them which you please) Human Explications may be made, and to a very good Purpose, without supposing them to be binding upon the Consciences of Men, so as that they shall not be at Liberty to examine them by the Scriptures, and be directed by their own Judgment whether they ought to comply with them or not. And thus, I say, it is in the very Point now before us. We propound to you OUR Sense concerning some Passages in the Scripture relating to the Christian Faith; which because we judge it to be the true Sense, we therefore require your Assent to, as a Condition of your being admitted to Holy Orders. No, say you, we must examine it by the Scripture our selves. Well, pray do so. We are so far from discouraging you in this, that we think it your indispensable Duty to examine it by the Scriptures. But what, you will ask, if after all we cannot think it reasonable to concur with you in your Explication? What? Why, you are still at Liberty to differ from us: We pretend not to lay any Obligation upon you to believe what your own Reason and Judgment will not permit you to believe; nor to act any otherwise than your own Consciences direct you. All the Business is, that we cannot in this Case admit you to the Office of Publick Teachers, nor can you think it fitting that we should, unless we who are appointed to judge of your Qualifications, must be directed by YOUR Judgments, and not by OUR OWN.

THIS Point might be illustrated by Hundreds of Instances in other Cases, where Tests are required of Men in order to their being admitted to Offices of Trust, and yet no Man complains, nor has any Reason to complain, that his Liberty of Private Judgment is taken from him. That which is apt to lead Men into Mistakes about this Matter, is, that in common Speech particular Explications of Scripture, when considered as they are made the Rule of admitting Men either to Holy Orders, or to the Communion of the Church, are stiled IMPOSED Articles, and IMPOSED Terms of Communion; by which Men may be led to fancy that there is a Necessity laid, or pretended to be laid, upon others to receive them, whether they be right or wrong. But if we take the Thing rightly the Case is far otherwise, at least among us, where particular Explications are indeed propounded, but they are not imposed, any otherwise than as that Word may be used where Men, with respect to their Faith and Conduct, are under the same Liberty of following their own Judgment and Conscience, as they would have been had such Explications been never at all propounded. In a Word; a Test, in the very Nature of it, is designed not to impose Opinions upon Men, but to discover what their Opinions are; not to lay a Force upon their Private Judgment in any Instance, but to bring their Private Judgment to Light.

WHEREFORE to proceed: When I say that those whose Office it is to appoint Men to the Ministry, are to be the Judges what is the true Sense of any dubious or controverted Article of Faith, I would not be understood as if I did not think it proper that the Superior Officers of the Church should be required

(o) Ibid. p. 235.

to give antecedent Proofs of their Orthodoxy as well as the Inferior. The Reason of the one is indeed founded in the other; for how is it possible that true Explications of Scripture should be propounded, if those whose Business it is to propound them do not understand the Scriptures rightly themselves? Of whatever Consequence therefore it is that a Presbyter be sound in the Faith, of the same Consequence it is that a Bishop be so; and accordingly the general Practice of the Church hath been, not to leave any single Bishop under a general Liberty to ordain any whom he should judge to be duly qualified; but to lay down Canons or standing Rules, which all should be obliged to receive, as a common Measure, whereby to determine who are proper Persons to be intrusted with the preaching of the Word, and who not. As this Method is perfectly consistent with the Liberty of Private Judgment (it being supposed that every one either is, or ought to be fully satisfied in his own Mind of the Agreeableness of these Rules to the Rule of Faith, before he takes the Office of a Bishop upon himself) so it is the most likely Way to keep out Heresies. For every one must own that those Explications of Scripture, which after the maturest Deliberation, and the Use of all proper Helps, are agreed upon by a whole Body of Men, are less liable to be faulty and defective, than those which particular Persons may frame to themselves.

AFTER all, it must be confessed that the Church may err as well (though not so readily) as Private Men. That therefore false Tests of Mens Orthodoxy may be required, and the Ministry of the Word hereby, instead of being confined to those who are sound in the Faith, be confined to those who have perverted the Faith. This hath sometimes actually happen'd, and wherever it does happen, it is visible enough that Religion must suffer. But I hope it will be thought no just Exception against any Scheme in which MEN only are concerned, that it is liable to those Inconveniencies which arise from Human Infirmary; and that you will not throw away that which in it Self or in its own Nature is a good Thing, because accidentally it may be perverted to a wrong End. This is no more than what is common in all Cases of a like Nature; Civil Government was intended, and is in its own Nature undoubtedly proper, to preserve the Peace and Order of the World; but it will have contrary Effects if it fall into wrong Hands. And thus it is with Ecclesiastical Government; if it is administred by fit Persons, it will have its End, and the Faith, through the Blessing of God, will be preserved; but if otherwise, it will fail of its End, and the Faith, so far as Human Power is able to contribute towards it, will be destroyed. The Evil in either Case arises not from the Nature of the Method it self, but either from the Weakness or the Wickedness of those who are intrusted with the Administration of it; upon which Account as it never is made an Objection in the one, so it ought not to be made an Objection in the other. If any Scheme could be thought of which would absolutely secure to the Church a Succession of Orthodox Teachers, I dare say all that wish well to Christianity would most gladly embrace it. But as this is impossible, unless it had pleased God to have done that which it hath not seemed meet in his Wisdom to do, *i. e.* to perpetuate the Extraordinary Gift of Inspiration, we must, and ought to be contented with such a Security as Human Prudence, under the Ordinary Guidance and Direction of God's Spirit, will afford us. Now it is not possible for the Wisdom of Man to find out any better, nor indeed any other Security for the Orthodoxy of Christian Ministers, than that which I have now been describing; and therefore be the Inconveniencies attending it what they will, they must either be born with, or you must say that it is not right and fitting for the Church to require any Security at all. This is in Effect acknowledged by one whose Evidence in the Case will, I suppose, be allowed to have some Weight. (*p*) *Supposing*, says he, *no other Sub-*

(*p*) Bishop of Bangor, *ibid* p. 246.

scription were requir'd of the CLERGY than to the SCRIPTURE as the WORD OF GOD, in which the Rule of Faith is contained,——this would not hinder but that the BISHOPS, as the Officers vested with the ordinary Power of appointing or ordaining MINISTERS under themselves, would still be the JUDGES of the QUALIFICATIONS of THESE PERSONS. But of what Qualifications? Why, he tells you presently, of their Morals and Temper, of their Learning and Sense. He speaks not one Word about their Faith, of which he knew very well it is impossible that the Bishops should be the Judges according to his Scheme. His Scheme therefore plainly supposes that no Security of Mens Orthodoxy OUGHT to be required. This is his Divinity! If a Man has but Reason and Honesty he is fit for the Church, for the Ministry, for every Thing! But, blessed be God, we have a much better Author to go to. The Writings of St. Paul are yet extant; and untill his Lordship can shew that in his first Epistle to Timothy there are no such Words as these, that even a DEACON must hold the Mystery of the Faith, his separating the Faith from those other Qualifications which a Bishop is to be Judge of, will appear as great a Contradiction to the Word of God, as most of his peculiar Notions are to the common Sense of Mankind.

BUT for as much as I have mentioned the Inconveniencies on the one side of the Question, it will not be amiss to put our Adversaries in mind of the Inconveniencies on the other. There is no Medium (as I have observed) between requiring an Assent to Human Explications, as the Test or Evidence of the Qualifications of Men for the Work of the Ministry, and the ordaining them under a general Liberty to interpret the Scriptures every one his own Way, and to preach such Doctrines as he shall best approve of. Supposing then such a Liberty granted, let us consider what will be the natural Consequences of it, and then judge whether the same and greater Objections do not lie against this Method, than against the other, which is now so much found Fault with. You would not have the Governours of the Church propound THEIR Interpretations of Scripture as the Rule of Publick Preaching, because they may be mistaken. But may not particular Persons be as easily, yea, more easily mistaken? And is not this as good a Reason at least why their Private Interpretations should not be made the Rule of Preaching, as the other is that the Interpretations of the Governours of the Church should not be made the Rule of Preaching? If you say there is no ill Consequence in this, because the Scriptures being open to all every Christian may examine these Interpretations by the Word of God, and reject them if he judges them not to be agreeable thereto: I answer, that the Scriptures are open to all upon either Supposition, and the Interpretations of Church Governours no more bind Men to an Implicit Faith, than the Interpretations of Private Pastors. But the Truth is, that the propounding false Interpretations of Scripture must always more or less be of bad Consequence to the State of Religion, because though all Christians be at Liberty to examine and judge of them by the Word of God, yet few comparatively speaking are capable of doing it, and Truth and Falshood will always be the same to those who are not able to discern the Difference. The Question therefore is, which of these two Methods, supposing equal Care and Honesty in the Pursuit of both, promises the greater Security against this Evil? (For that there should be an absolute Security either under the one or under the other, is, as I said before, impossible.) And whether it be not likely that FEWER false Interpretations of Scripture will be propounded to the People, in case some standing Rule of Preaching be settled by Publick Authority, than if every Private Pastor be left to preach his own Interpretations? And methinks this Point can admit of no long Debate, if Men will but duely consider how much easier a Thing it is for the Church to provide, that the main Body of her Governours be such as are qualified to judge of the Scriptures, than it is for these Governours to provide that the main Body of those whom they shall appoint under them as Publick Preachers of the Word be so. The Number of those whose Office it is to

separate Men to the Ministry, no where bears any Proportion to the Number of those who are and must be separated for the Service of the Church; there is therefore no Comparison between the Probability that there is of procuring a competent Number of sober, discreet, and understanding Men to fill the Posts of the former, and of procuring a competent Number of Persons so qualified to supply the Places of the latter. The Reason is, because the Number of such Persons with respect to the Gross of Mankind is but small, so small, that the Church I fear must, for the greater Part of it, be destitute of Pastors, were none admitted to the Ministry but those who in all Respects are perfectly well qualified to interpret the Word of God. It is not now with the Preachers of the Gospel as it was at the Beginning: they had then nothing to do but to declare what they had *seen with their Eyes*, and *heard with their Ears*; and consequently their Honesty and Fidelity was more to be regarded than their Parts and Understandings. But the Case is now very much altered, Christianity by running so far from its original Source, has taken in a Variety of heterogenous Mixtures, which to discriminate from the pure Word of God (especially considering how much ART hath contributed towards incorporating them as it were one with the other) requires a Depth of Learning and Judgment beyond what is common to the Generality of Mankind. There are few Heresies from the Faith which great Learning and good Sense have not been called in to countenance; he therefore that would effectually crush them must take away these Supports. And do we look that every Parish Minister should be qualified for this? Vain Expectation! It will be well if a competent Number can be found sufficiently qualified by their Sobriety, Diligence, and Discretion; under which Qualifications their Want of great Abilities to interpret the Scriptures can be no bad Consequence; and a moderate Share of Understanding will render them very useful Men, upon Supposition that they have some standing Rule or Measure of Preaching laid before them. But to leave all under a general Liberty to interpret, when so few have Abilities for it, is a sure Way to bring in all those Extravagancies which Fancy can suggest; which Evil in a great Measure will certainly, and in all Probability will wholly, be avoided by the other Method; since how difficult soever it may be to assert the true Sense of the Scriptures amidst the Variety of different Opinions, and how few soever are furnished with Abilities for it; the Church may certainly secure for its Governours a sufficient Number of those who are most able, and consequently of such, who, if (as is supposed) they will act honestly and carefully, will be least of all liable to err in their Decisions.

So far then as I am able to judge, this Method makes far the better Provision of the two, that the true and genuine Sense of God's Word be propounded to the People. If it fails, it must because it is not so well pursued as it ought to be. It is either because the Church is careless in the Choice of her Governours; or because those Governours are careless in their Examinations by the Rule of Faith; or because, Lust and Ambition prevailing, Governours are appointed, and Articles of Faith settled, not with a Regard to Truth and Honesty, but with a View to the Pleasures, Profits and Honours of this World. And what Method is there that will not fail under such a State of the Case as this? If that general Liberty were indulged which is now contended for, would not, supposing the Governours of the Church to be swayed by such Motives; would not, supposing them to be careless in the Choice of Persons to serve in the Sacred Ministry; would not, supposing them to have more Regard to their own worldly Interests, than to the Qualifications, *i. e.* (as the Bishop of *Bangor* says) to the Morals, Learning and Sense of those who offer themselves; would not, I say, supposing all this, the Evil be yet greater? I am not insensible how much Christianity must suffer whenever the Government of the Church falls into corrupt Hands; Popery is a sufficient Instance of this. Nor do I want to be advertized how far the confining the Ministerial Office, and
together

together therewith the Profits and Revenues of the Church, to the Professors of any one particular Set of Doctrines, may prove an Encouragement to Men of wicked Minds to make Merchandize of the Word of God; these are Evils which every good Christian must lament. But then I think it a very sad Way of remedying these Evils, to throw aside all Government, by a general License to every Clergyman to preach any thing he likes best, which, in order to secure the holy Oracles of Truth from the Corruptions of a few, is to expose them to the Corruptions of all. But how then, you'll ask, shall a Reformation at any time be effected? If the Governours of the Church are to determine what are the Doctrines of the Gospel; and none to be admitted to the Ministry but those whom they shall appoint; the Consequence will be, that when once the Government is got into ill Hands, it must for ever continue so, and every Age must inherit the Corruptions of the preceding. There is a very great Inconveniency in this without doubt; but forasmuch as the Inconveniences attending an universal Liberty are much greater, I can see no Remedy but what must be expected from the good Hand of Providence, who is able to interpose, and when he seeth it meet certainly will interpose in such Extremities as these. Those who are sensible of these Corruptions must do their Duties faithfully, and with a good Conscience; praying that he, in whose *Hands are the Hearts of Men as the Rivers of Water*, would bring those whom he has vested with Authority to order and govern his People, to a due Sense of themselves, and of the Sacredness of that Trust which is reposed in them; or that he would raise up some mighty Spirits from among them, who, supported by such Means as he in his Wisdom shall see to be most proper, shall break through all Oppositions, and be the Instruments of settling the Affairs of his Church upon a right Foundation. It was thus that our Reformation was brought about; not by a general License granted to Preachers; a Method which to be sure the Church of *Rome* could not permit, and which our Reformers themselves so far saw the Evil of, as not to make Use of it when they had it in their Power. 'Tis a Method indeed, which how well soever it may serve at some Times, and upon certain Occasions, is not calculated for a Continuance; and were it now to be try'd (which I hope in God I shall never see) I doubt not but they who are the fondest of it, would in a while be convinced of the Necessity of coming back again to the old Rule, in order to put a Stop to those Confusions which would every Day ensue.

ONE Thing more there is, which ought not to be forgotten, *viz.* That in setting apart Men for the Service of the Church, that Method ought certainly to be pursued which tends most to Christian Edification. Edification there can be none, if the People are under no Certainty what they are to believe; that Scheme therefore which tends to distract Mens Minds, does certainly tend to hinder Edification. Once more then I pray; Suppose a general Liberty granted to Preachers, and consider the Consequence of it under this View. And what can common Sense suggest to you but this, that the different and contradictory Doctrines published every Day, would be as various as the different and contradictory Opinions of Men. One while this Thing would be taught as a Gospel Truth; another while it would be set aside again. To Day one Preacher would tell you that this is an Article of Faith; to Morrow another would tell you it is a Human Invention. One Parish would be instructed in the Doctrine of *Arius*, another in that of *Socinus*, and the same Parish, by a quick Succession of Teachers, might have all Sorts of Doctrines taught them within the Compass of a few Years. What must unlearned, honest, and well-meaning Men, who come for *Instruction*, think of this; or whither must they go for Satisfaction? To their Bibles I'll warrant! But are they able to understand their Bibles without the Help of their Teachers? If they are, why are they provided with Teachers? If they are not, is it not a most lamentable Case that they are provided for in such a Manner that they can receive no Satisfac-

tion from their Teachers? I need not tell the Reader how little a Friend I am to that Doctrine which places Mens Title to Salvation merely upon their Sincerity. But such Confidence I have in the Mercies of God, that I must needs think the Christian People in a much safer Condition under sincerely embraced Errors, than under that Hesitancy and Perplexity which such a continual Opposition of Preachers one against another must necessarily produce. In the one Case they are not so perfect Christians as they ought to be; in the other they are in a very fair Way to turn downright Heathens.

BUT it is time that I draw this Point to a Conclusion; for in truth, if the Method which I am pleading for be agreeable to the Gospel Rule, there will be no Room left for us to find Fault with the Expediency of it. Whether it be so or not, I shall therefore leave the Reader to judge, after I have laid before him a short View of the Evidence which has been produced, in the following Propositions, *viz.*

1. BOTH Sides do agree, that in every particular Church or Society of Christians there must be Teachers to instruct the People.

2. REASON tells us, and the Scripture expressly (*q*) directs, that those who are to teach the Faith of the Gospel, must themselves hold the Faith of the Gospel; and consequently that so far as is possible none but such be admitted to the Ministry.

3. OF this Qualification therefore, those must necessarily have a Right to judge, whose Office it is to appoint Men to the Ministry.

4. THE Faith of the Gospel lies not in any Sense indefinitely affixed to the Words of Scripture, but in that precise determinate Meaning, which was signified or intended by the Sacred Writers.

5. THOSE therefore whose Office it is to appoint Men to the Ministry, and who in virtue of that Office have a Right to judge of the Qualifications of Men, are bound carefully to inquire which among all the Variety of Senses, in which the Words of Scripture are or may be understood, is the true one.

6. THOSE whose Office it is to appoint Men to the Ministry, have now nothing to direct them in this Inquiry but their own Reason, assisted by natural Helps; and consequently must in this Inquiry be determined by their own Reason.

7. THEREFORE whatever Sense appears to them to be the true Sense, that must be the Faith; an Agreement in which they are in Conscience bound to require, as a Condition of admitting Men into the Ministry.

8. A GENERAL Assent to the Scriptures as the Word of God is no Proof of this Agreement.

9. THEREFORE this Sense must be particularly set forth, and an express Assent to it required, as the Test or Evidence of a due Qualification.

You see the whole Weight of the Argument at once, than which I can think of nothing more plain and conclusive. There is therefore manifestly nothing faulty, but a great deal praise-worthy, in requiring Subscriptions to Human Expi-

(q) 1 Tim. 3. 9. Tit. 1. 9.

cations of those who offer themselves Candidates for Holy Orders, as a Security for their Orthodoxy. A Fault there may be indeed in requiring Men to subscribe to more Points than are necessary; which I think happens when they are required to subscribe to those Points, about which (how true soever they may be in themselves) Christians may differ from one another, and yet all of them hold the common Faith; and were the Meaning of these late Complaints only that something of this Sort might be rectified, it had been a Matter perhaps not altogether unworthy the Consideration of our Superiours. But to cry out against the Thing in general, and to challenge a Liberty for every Man, under the Character of a Christian Minister, to publish any Doctrines he has a mind to; bespeaks a Disposition in those who do it, not to be satisfied with reasonable Terms, and can proceed from no other Cause, than that they themselves are so much bloated out with new Conceits, that the ancient Boundaries of our Church, even as to those Points which she hath adjudged to be essential to the Faith of a Christian, are become too narrow for them. But if this be the Case, they ought for that very Reason (unless they will first shew that she hath been mistaken) to be kept just where they are; and the only proper Advice that can be given to such Persons is, that they would endeavour to bring their own Dimensions to a just Proportion, which if they can once do, I may venture to promise them that they will find no Occasion to complain for Want of room.

As a Conclusion to the whole, give me leave to add, that since whatever is properly required as a Condition of admitting a Man to the Ministry, is also properly required as a Condition of his Continuance in the Ministry; therefore if any one shall at any time oppugn those Doctrines which he subscribed to at his Ordination; and shall persist in such Opposition, after all proper Methods have been made Use of for his Reformation; this (supposing that the Church hath not in the mean while otherwise determined concerning those Points) will be a good Reason why he ought to be removed from his Office.

CHAP. V.

Of CONFESSIONS of FAITH.

I HAVE hitherto been considering the first and principal Means of supporting the Christian Faith, to wit, INSTRUCTION; and the Method necessary to be observed, that Instruction be rightly administred; so that thus far the Point relates to the Clergy only. My next Business shall be to inquire what is necessary and proper to be done, that Instruction, when rightly administred, may have its due Effect; and this will bring the Case down to all Christians in general. Now as to the first Effect of Instruction, *i. e.* the first Conversion to the Faith; 'tis obvious to understand, that supposing due Care and Abilities on the part of the Teacher, this must entirely depend upon the good Disposition of the Hearer; this therefore is a Point altogether out of the Question. But it is necessary to provide, that when the Faith is once received, it may be continued in with Stedfastness and Perseverance, that it may every Day grow more lively and vigorous, and not gradually decay and dwindle into Apostacy, either through the Prevalency of our own corrupt Affections, the evil Suggestions of the Devil, or the Artifices and Insinuations of wicked Men. This therefore is that which falls under the Care of Church-Governours; and for this God himself hath also prescribed us a Method, to which the Office of Church-Governours is relative, to wit EXTERNAL and VISIBLE COMMUNION; whereby it is provided that there be a constant and regular Attendance of the People to the Instructions of their Pastors, and a Concurrence in the Use of all those

Means which Christ hath appointed for the obtaining the Grace of the Holy Ghost, to strengthen and support them under all Temptations, and to lead them to all Sorts of Improvements. Moreover Christians being hereby separated as it were from the rest of Mankind as God's peculiar Inheritance, and united into an intimate League and Fraternity among themselves, they have hereby the better Opportunities of *building up each other* in their Holy Faith, as well as of *provoking one another to Love and good Works*, which Things have a reciprocal Tendency the one to increase and set forward the other. There is no Need for me to speak to these Points at large; 'tis sufficient that visible Communion is a Method of God's own Appointment; for being such we ought not to doubt of its Expediency; nor consequently of the Necessity that all Christians are under of joining themselves together in visible Communion; nor of the Obligation that lies upon Church-Governors to provide, so far as in them lies, that visible Communion be preserved and maintained. We must therefore consider what is required that a Man may become a Member of visible Communion; and this can be known no other Way than by inquiring into the Nature of visible Communion, and shewing in what it doth properly consist.

THE Scripture Word which we render *Communion*, is *Κοινωνία*, which signifies a *joint* or *mutual Use, Participation* of, or *Agreement* in any thing; whence by a Metaphor it comes to signify a *SOCIETY*, the Formality of which lies in this, that it is a *Number of Men AGREEING TOGETHER in the USE of certain RULES, and the PARTICIPATION of certain PRIVILEGES peculiar to themselves*; insomuch that wherever this sort of *Κοινωνία* is, there is properly a Society, and *vice versa*. Now the Church being represented in Scripture as a Body or Society of Men under Jesus Christ, the Head or Governour supreme of that Society, and it being also in virtue of our Membership with Christ that we are declared to be intitled to those Benefits or Privileges which he hath procured by his Death and Sufferings; the Band or common Tie by which Men are united into one Society under Christ, must be the *Κοινωνία*, eminently so called, in which all who believe in Christ are concerned mutually to join, and it can therefore signify nothing less than a mutual Agreement in all those Particulars by which Christians are distinguished from other Men; or in other Words, a mutual Agreement in the following those Rules, or in being directed by those Laws, which have been prescribed or appointed by Jesus Christ, who is the Head of that Society whereof they are Members. So that in short Christian Communion is nothing else but a joint Agreement in the common Terms of Christian Salvation, and in such a Behaviour as is suitable thereto; for it is by adhering to the Terms of Salvation that a Man is united to Christ, and consequently a joint or mutual Adherence to these Terms must be the Band of Christian Communion.

THIS then being the Nature of Christian Communion in general, it plainly follows, that among those between whom there is no visible Agreement in the Faith, and much more among those between whom there is a visible Disagreement in the Faith, there can be no visible Communion. For whatever it is, a real Agreement in which is necessary to true Christian Communion, in that a visible Agreement must be necessary to visible Communion. Now that an Agreement in the Faith is necessary to true Christian Communion, is evident, not only from hence, that Faith is one of those Laws or Terms of Salvation which Christ has propounded, but from the express Words of St. Paul, who not only calls this Communion *Κοινωνία εἰς τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον*, a *Fellowship in the Gospel*, or in the Acknowledgment of that Method of Salvation preached by Jesus Christ (*Philip. 1. 5.*) but tells us, that in the Body or Communion of Christians there must be *μία πίστις*, *one Faith*, even as there is *one Lord* and *one Baptism*. *Eph. 4. 4, 5.* And at *Ver. 11, 12, 13.* he says, that the End for which Christ gave *Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers*, was—*the edifying or building up*

up the Body of Christ, till we all come — unto a perfect Man. Now wherein does our being built up into one Body and growing up into one perfect Man under Christ the Head consist? Why he tells us that it consists in the UNITY of the FAITH, and of the KNOWLEDGE of the SON of GOD; which he opposeth to the being tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the Sleight of Men, and cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; as that which is the Property of Children, and not of perfect Men; as that which hinders our growing up into him in all things which is the Head, even Christ. *Vers.* 14, 15. To the same Purpose St. John, 1 Ep. 1. 3. *That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have FELLOWSHIP with us; and truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* The End and Purpose you see of his declaring these Things was, that those to whom he declared them might have Fellowship, &c. which implies, that unless they received these Things? they could have no Fellowship. And what were these Things? Why you have it more plainly, *Vers.* 1, 2. *That which was from the Beginning, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled of the WORD of LIFE, — even that ETERNAL LIFE which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us — declare we unto you.* The embracing that which was manifested concerning the Word of Eternal Life, i. e. the Faith concerning God's Method of Salvation by Jesus Christ, was therefore that, without which they could have no Fellowship with the Apostles, nor consequently any Fellowship with the Father, or with Jesus Christ.

IN order therefore to the admitting or receiving a Man as a Member of visible Communion, it is necessary that he first of all give sufficient Evidence or Assurance of his holding the Faith; of which Point those undoubtedly must be the Judges whose Business it is to receive Men into Communion; and they are all those who are authorized to administer Holy Baptism; this being a standing Ordinance of Christ's own Appointment, by a right Application whereof those to whom it is applied are, as by an Instrument, ingrafted into the Body of Christ's Church. This, by the way, shews how reasonable and necessary a thing it is that the Administration of this sacred Rite be not committed indifferently to any Hands, but confined to Men of approved Orthodoxy; for since those who are vested with the Power of administering Baptism, are thereby constituted Judges of the Qualifications of those who offer themselves to be received into Communion, it is very fitting that they themselves should be duly qualified. For if those who hold not the Faith themselves be authorized to administer Baptism, the Consequence must be, that they will think themselves obliged to administer it to others who hold not the Faith (and possibly to such only) which in Effect is to destroy all visible Communion, by receiving those as Members of the Church, between whom and those who do hold the Faith there can indeed be no visible Communion. Forasmuch then as the Ministers of the Gospel are the only Persons ordinarily intrusted with this Power, this Consideration will afford a distinct Argument for that Care concerning their Orthodoxy which has been pleaded for in the foregoing Chapter; because if you admit all indifferently to the Office of the Ministry, whether they hold the Faith or hold it not, you must allow them to baptize all indifferently, the Reason in both Cases holding the same. Now to proceed; As to that Evidence or Assurance which, I say, every one ought to give of his holding the Faith, in order to his being admitted or received as a Member of visible Communion; provided it be but given, 'tis of no Consequence in what particular Way or Manner it be done. The ancient Practice of the Church in this Case hath been to require, not SUBSCRIPTIONS, as in the Case of admitting Men to Holy Orders, but (what answer the Purpose every whit as well, and are, I think more proper where so great Numbers are concerned) verbal CONFESSIONS or DECLARATIONS only. This Security, I say (in conformity to the Gospel Rule) was always required antecedently to Baptism, as those who in Consequence of such

Confessions or Declarations were baptized, were ever esteemed Members of the visible Church: But because the Opinions of Men are changeable, and those who are now found in the Faith, may within a while apostatize and fall away from it, therefore Confessions of Faith were introduced into those Forms of Publick Worship, which every Member of the Church as such was obliged to join in, as well that Christians might themselves be daily put in mind unto what they were baptized, as that the Church by these solemn Acknowledgments might receive a standing Testimony of their preserving that Faith entire, upon their Profession of which they were admitted into the Communion of the Church, and which being once lost, they can no longer continue to be Members of it. The Thing indeed is just and reasonable, that in every Publick Act of visible Communion (of which Sort is the Publick Worship of God) there should be a Remembrance made of that upon which visible Communion is founded.

THUS far, I think, we go upon very safe and uncontestable Principles; but then as to the particular Manner in which these Forms of Confession ought to be drawn up, this is a Point which will afford us some Matter of Dispute. Those who have declared themselves against propounding Human Explications of Scripture Words to the Clergy as Tests of their Orthodoxy, are (in great Conformity to themselves I confess) equally against the same Method in reference to the Laity. They would have no other Security required in either Case than this (or what is equivalent to it) *viz.* an Assent to the Scriptures as the Word of God, and consequently as the Rule of a Christian's Faith and Conduct; that as on the one hand Men agreeing in this one Principle, how variously soever differing in their Opinions about the Sense and Meaning of the Scriptures, may be admitted to the Ministry; so on the other hand all who agree to the same Principle may under the same Diversity of Opinions (if nothing else intervenes to render them unqualified) be received as Members of visible Communion. According to this Scheme then all Confessions of Faith ought to run in this general Form, I BELIEVE THE SCRIPTURES TO BE THE WORD OF GOD; or else (if you will be particular) they ought to be drawn up in Scripture Terms only; and this latter is the Method which is now contended for. But as with respect to the former Case I have before shewn it to be inconsistent with the End and Design of the Ministerial Office, so with respect to this it appears, I think, by the Principles just now laid down, to be inconsistent with the very Nature of visible Communion. Visible Communion (as has been shewn) implies a visible Agreement in the Faith. Visible Communion therefore can subsist no longer than there is among Christians a joint Concurrence in such solemn and publick Acts as do visibly express or signify this Agreement. Forasmuch then as this Agreement cannot be visibly expressed or signified any otherwise than by a joint Use of, or a mutual Agreement in the same Publick Forms of Confession, the Consequence must be, that if these Forms be of such a Sort, as that an Agreement in the Use of them does not visibly imply an Agreement in the Faith, there will not then (notwithstanding the joint Use of such Forms) be any visible Communion. Now this is the Case according to the present Scheme: For the Forms of Confession which it proposeth are of such a Sort, as that an Agreement in the Use of them does visibly imply an Agreement in nothing but this, *viz.* that the Scriptures are the Word of God. Now the Christian Faith (as I have shewn above) lying not in this, but in the Belief of those Truths concerning the Salvation of Man by Jesus Christ, of which the Scriptures are declarative (which Belief it is evident, and the very Scheme supposeth, a Man may not have, though he believes the Scriptures to be the Word of God;) therefore the Forms of Confession proposed by this Scheme are of such a Sort, as that an Agreement in the Use of them does not visibly imply an Agreement in the Faith.

THIS

THIS Scheme therefore plainly proposes such a Method of gathering Men into visible Communion; as destroys the very Notion of visible Communion. Of which that the Reader may be yet more fully convinced, I must desire that he would somewhat more particularly attend to the Consequences of this Proposal, in reference to the three main Branches of visible Communion, *viz.* Publick Confession, Publick Prayer, and Participation of the Eucharist. As to the first of these, this Proposal manifestly brings it to a mere outside Formality. For let us suppose a Creed or Form of Confession drawn up, as these Men would have it, in Scripture Terms, and that this Creed, and none else, were appointed to be used both at Baptism and in the Publick Assemblies of those, who owning the Scriptures in general to be the Word of God, do all of them go under the common Name or Appellation of Christians. Let us suppose this, I say, to be the Case; and I will ask any reasonable Man among them to what End or Purpose the Use of this Creed is appointed. Is it to shew who among them are able to speak? Why no; a sensible Man will answer (or he will be silent) that the End of it is, that Christians may declare or testify their mutual Consent to the Things signified or intended by the Words of that Creed. But how so? Can that be the End of any Appointment, which you your selves who make it, declare not to be the End of it? Is there not a manifest Difference among you in many Points of Faith? And was not this Creed framed in Scripture Terms only with this very Intent and Purpose, that notwithstanding this Difference concerning the Sense of those Words, ye might all of you join together (as ye call it) in one visible Communion? Say then either that your Scheme is absurd, or shew that it is not an Absurdity to suppose that Men differing from each other about that Faith, the receiving of which is necessary to make them true and real Members of Christian Communion, should merely by the Use or Pronunciation of certain Scripture Words, or Phrases, become visibly such. Either come back to that Method which ye have laid aside, and let it be plainly set forth what it is that in your Judgment a Christian ought to believe, or else shew that it is not a detestable Mockery, in the most solemn Manner in the World, and before the awful Presence of God to make a Shew or Appearance of confessing your Agreement in the Faith, when in truth you confess nothing at all. I say, *nothing at all*; for the Confession lies not in the mere Sound of Words, but in the Meaning affixed to those Words. To confess is to declare my Assent to something. Declare my Assent I cannot by the Use of Words, concerning which I give no Evidence in what Sense I use them. Now this Scheme proposeth that no such Evidence be given; and what else then doth it propose, but that in the most solemn Act of external Communion Christians should be (in the Apostle's Language) *Barbarians* to one another? To use Words the Sense or Meaning whereof is not understood, is to speak in an unknown Tongue; this in Publick Prayer would be intolerable, and surely it is not less so in Publick Confession. For these were both appointed as Means to one and the same End, *viz.* the Edification or building up the Body of Christ, and it is impossible that a Man should be edified by that which he doth not understand. In what Manner Publick Prayer serves to Edification, there is no Occasion for me to note; but Publick Confession manifestly contributes to this good Purpose, *viz.* that by beholding each others Faith, Christians may receive mutual Support and Strength from one another. And not only so, but this being the Mark or Touchstone, by which those who are sound in the Faith are distinguished from those who are not, this serves as a Direction both to the Pastors of the Church, and to private Members, to whom and in what Sort to apply their Instructions. This End therefore is in a great Measure frustrated, when Publick Forms of Confession are so contrived as not to be any Evidence of what a Man believes; for *if the Trumpet gives an uncertain Sound, who shall prepare himself for the Battle?* But to proceed;

It would be of some Use to those who are so fond of this Method, to consider what Sort of visible Communion that must be, wherein every particular Member (so called) should be allowed to make Use of different and contradictory Confessions, especially at the same Time and in the same Publick Assembly. For my own part, it is not in my Power to frame an Idea of any greater or more shocking Absurdity; and it should seem that they themselves know not how to digest it. For why do they yet plead for one Form, in which all may join, and not that every Man may be left to chuse his own Form? Is it not that Christians may seem at least to make one and the same Confession? And why one and the same Confession, unless it be that they themselves think it to be an Absurdity to have different and contradictory Confessions in one and the same visible Communion? But if you attend to it, this Method proposeth, that in Reality, and with respect to him who searcheth the Heart, there may be under one and the same visible Communion (as it is called) not one and the same Confession, but different and contradictory Confessions. For the Confession (as I said just now) lying not in the mere Sound of Words, but in the Sense or Meaning affixed to those Words, it will follow, that among those who use the same Forms in different and contradictory Senses, there must be different and contradictory Confessions. But let us not so miserably impose upon our selves, as if God could be pleased with those Inconsistencies, which would be abominable in the Eyes of Man!

IN short; if it be so, that whoever acknowledges the Scriptures to be the Word of God, how much soever he may pervert and corrupt the Doctrines contained in the Scripture, is therefore a fit Person to be received as a Member of visible Communion; it will be highly reasonable that all distinct and particular Confessions of Faith, whether conceived in Scripture Terms, or not in Scripture Terms, be laid aside. Which when once those who plead for COMPREHENSION will openly aver, and maintain it to be agreeable to the Gospel Rule, that no other Confession be required but this, *I believe that the Scriptures are the Word of God*, I trust that their Scheme will be thought by all unprejudic'd Men to carry with it its own Confutation. The Terms of visible Communion ought to be the same now that they were from the Beginning; because the Terms of Salvation, which are the Foundation of visible Communion, are the same. And were no distinct and Particular Confessions of Faith required at the Beginning? Could a general Belief in the Scriptures, as the Word of God, be the Subject Matter of the Confessions of those who were received into the Church even before the Scriptures were written? This is impossible. But something equivalent to it (perhaps you'll say) might. Nor this. For the Scripture (as has been shewn) standing in the same relation to us now that the preaching of Christ and his Apostles did to the first Christians, the Equivalent must be, that Christ and his Apostles were Teachers sent from God; or, which comes to the same Thing, that what they taught was the Word of God. And was this then the Subject Matter of their Confessions? Did ever any one offer himself to be baptized upon this general Belief only? We read of no such Instance; and if we did, doubtless we should also read the Answer: "You believe us to be Teachers sent from God; and that what we teach is the Word of God: But do you know what that Word is which we teach? Do you receive that Message concerning the Salvation of Men by Jesus Christ, which we come to declare?" Thus must they have answered (and thus our Saviour in Effect did answer to *Nicodemus*, who confessed him to be a *Teacher sent from God*) because this was evidently that Faith, unto which all who received Baptism were then baptized. And the same Answer we have to give to those who now tell us that they believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and would be received into Communion upon that Faith. "Do you indeed believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God? You believe well. But do you understand what the Scripture teacheth? Have you that Faith of which the Scrip-
tures

“ tures are declarative, and which they prescribe as a necessary Condition of
 “ Salvation? If you have, we receive you as Members of Christ's Body. If
 “ not, you have no real Communion with Christ, and therefore can have no
 “ visible Communion with us, who are united together no otherwise than by
 “ such visible Acts as are expressive of that real Communion.”

BUT I am insensibly falling back to a Point which, I think, has been clearly enough settled already. I now proceed to the second main Branch of visible Communion, *viz.* Publick PRAYER, the great End of which as such is likewise manifestly set aside by this new Scheme. When we meet together to offer up our Prayers to God, we expect some peculiar and extraordinary Blessing to attend upon our joint Addresses, and we have Encouragement from Scripture so to do. But the Blessing promised to our Publick Devotions depends upon this Condition, that we be a Congregation *met together in the Name of Christ*; which surely doth not signify that we be a Congregation met together under this general Belief only that the Scriptures are the Word of God, or that Jesus Christ was a Prophet, considered as distinct from a Belief of his Doctrines; but implies that we be met together under the Influence and Direction of that Faith concerning him which he came to reveal to Mankind. More especially and particularly it implies a Belief in Christ as our Mediator and Redeemer, and as a Consequence of this, a firm Reliance upon his Merits and Intercession for us, as the Means of our Acceptance with God. Those therefore who propose (as the Authors of this Scheme manifestly do) that even they who deny this Faith may be admitted to join with us in Publick Prayer, do in Effect propose that we may not be a Congregation met together in the Name of Christ. And what can be the Reason of this, but that they believe that the Benefit and Efficacy of Publick Prayer has no Connexion with our being met together in the Name of Christ, but depends solely upon this Consideration, that we be met together every one of us in the Sincerity of our own Hearts to worship God, not according to that Faith which Jesus Christ was sent from Heaven to reveal, but according to that which we have each of us framed to our selves? Now were this really the Case, it would be advisable that even the Name of Jesus might be expunged out of our Liturgies; and that all Publick Forms of Prayer should be so framed, as that all at least might join in them who acknowledge the Providence of God, and a Judgment to come. For it is certainly a Fault to prescribe such Forms as will necessarily exclude from the joint Use of them any who are qualified to be joint Partakers in those Blessings, which God has promised to us as a Congregation met together. But the Blessing, as I have shewn, is promised to those who are met together in the Name of Christ, and to those only; and if any one will say that this doth not imply a Belief of that Faith which he came to reveal to Mankind, let such a one shew me what Sense there is in supposing that God should have any where promised to accept of the Prayers of those whom he hath no where promised to accept to Salvation.

LASTLY; As to the Participation of the Eucharist; this being a sacred Rite, whereby we do in the most solemn Manner make a Profession of our joint Union with Christ, and our firm Expectancy of Life and Salvation, in virtue of the Promises made by and through him, both for our selves and those with whom we communicate; it plainly follows, that we cannot consistently partake of it in Company with those who apparently fall short in anything which is, or (for it is all one) which we judge to be a Term or Condition upon which Salvation is promised. For to do this, were to make a Profession of our being united to Christ jointly with those, whom yet we our selves believe not to be united to Christ; and of our Expectancy of Life and Salvation through the Promises of God, for those, whom yet we our selves judge to have no Right to Salvation in virtue of those Promises. So long therefore as we be-

lieve any Doctrines to be necessary to be received in order to Salvation, so long it is absurd for us to admit those to the Table of the Lord who openly deny these Doctrines; and consequently that Scheme which proposes the Reception of all, however unqualified in this respect, *i. e.* how much soever differing from us about that Faith which is necessary to qualify us for Salvation, must be inconsistent with the Nature and End of this Holy Institution.

THE Result then is this; that there is the same need of Human Explications of Scripture Words with respect to Lay-Communion, that there is with respect to Ministerial Communion. For the holding the Faith of the Gospel is necessary in both Cases; and a general Belief that the Scriptures are the Word of God is no Evidence of this in either. To those therefore who tax us with unreasonable Severity in denying Communion to Men of all Sects (agreeing in this only, that the Scriptures are the Word of God) and charge us with disuniting Christians from one another; we must return the Charge of Absurdity and Contradiction, in requiring that such should be received into Communion with us. They may possibly be admitted to the Tokens and Privileges of Communion; *i. e.* they may be baptized; they may be permitted to join with us in our Publick Confessions, in our Publick Prayers, and in the Participation of the Eucharist; and they may also be advanced to the Ministerial Office. But to admit those to the Tokens and Privileges of Communion, with whom there can indeed be no Communion, is absurd; and when you have done all you can, no Communion there can possibly be where there is no Agreement in the Faith. If then the Charge of disuniting must lie upon us who refuse Communion, and not rather upon those who have rendred themselves unqualified for Communion (as one would think it ought) we answer, that we disunite none but those who ought to be disunited. We do not disunite Christians from one another, but Christians from those who call themselves Christians, but are not truly and thoroughly so. We separate not any from our selves, but those who (as we are verily persuaded) have, by denying *the Faith once delivered to the Saints*, already separated themselves from Christ; none but those who have renounced that real Communion, which is the only Foundation of visible Communion. If indeed *the Faith once delivered to the Saints* had nothing to do in uniting us to Christ our Head, *i. e.* in intitling us to Salvation in virtue of his Promises, the Complaint I must own would be reasonable; for certainly if a Man may be qualified for Salvation without Faith, he may be qualified for Communion without Faith. But as we have not thus learned Christ, we can see no other proper (nor indeed any other possible) Method of uniting those who have departed from the Faith together with us into one visible Communion, than by recalling them first of all from their Errors, and bringing them to the *Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God*. Till this is done, to pretend to join with them in one external and visible Communion, is to turn external Communion into a Jest, and to expose our selves to the malicious Ridicule of those Scorners, who are ready to catch hold of and improve to the uttermost every Opportunity that offers it self to make Christianity look contemptible.

I FLATTER my self so far, as to hope that what I have offered will have some Weight with unprejudic'd Men, towards convincing them, that the general Terms of Communion, as now establish'd in the Church of England, are not less agreeable to Reason, than they are to ancient and primitive Practice. And now the Point being brought thus far, it may not be altogether useless to advertise the Reader upon what Basis the opposite Scheme is founded, which, if he will but attend a little, he must very plainly perceive to be the modern Doctrine about the Availableness of Sincerity to Justification. This is the chief Corner Stone, with which the whole Fabrick is so firmly and inseparably connected, that if it were so that there were no Possibility of overthrowing the one

one, it would be a vain Thing to attempt the other. I have observed more than once in this Discourse, that what is sufficient to qualify a Man for Salvation, according to the Terms of the Gospel, is sufficient to qualify him for visible Communion; and the Thing is too plain to bear being disputed. For what is it but to disjoint our selves from Christ our Head, to refuse to hold Communion with those, who, so far as we can judge by his revealed Will, do hold Communion with him? Visible Communion is in the very Notion of it, a visible Communion in the Adherence to the common Terms of Christian Salvation; the Terms of Communion therefore, and the Terms of Salvation, as they rightly cannot, so they never ought to be separated the one from the other. If then the declared Terms of Salvation in the Gospel be no more than these, *viz.* That a Man believes in Jesus Christ, as a Prophet sent from God; receives the Scriptures, in which his Preaching is contained, as a Declaration of the Divine Will; examines them carefully, according to the best of his Abilities; embraces every Doctrine which he judges to be there taught, and practises such Duties as he finds there commanded; If these, I say, be the Conditions upon which the Gospel promises Salvation; these also must be the Conditions, upon the visible Adherence to which, Men ought to be received as Members of visible Communion. Every one ought to be admitted upon the Profession of this general Faith, and their Opinions concerning particular Doctrines ought never to be enquired into, because the Belief of particular Doctrines (as is now supposed) is not essential to that Faith which qualifies for Salvation. But if this Foundation be false, these Conclusions must be false too, and the Truth will lie on the other side. If this general Faith be not that Faith to which the Gospel promises Salvation; it cannot then be that Faith, upon the Profession whereof Men are to be received into Communion. If the Scriptures are to be received, not because this Belief is it self the Gospel Faith, but because the Scriptures are declarative of that Faith, it must then be enquired what that Faith is which the Scripture has declared; that is to say, it must be considered what those particular Doctrines are, the Belief of which Jesus Christ, according to the Scripture, has made a Condition of Salvation; and according to the Sense or Judgment which we frame concerning these Doctrines, we must proceed in determining who are, and who are not qualified for visible Communion.——But the Pursuit of these Points has been the Subject of the foregoing Discourse, and there is no need to repeat them over again.

IT was not for nothing then that this Doctrine has been furbish'd up of late; the whole Scheme of COMPREHENSION (which, if I am able to judge, is the great Thing at heart) stands you see upon its Shoulders. And as this was the Reason why I thought a distinct and particular Refutation of it to be a proper and necessary Introduction, towards opening the true Merits of the Cause in Debate between the Bishop of *Bangor* and the Establish'd Church of *England*; so it discovers either great Weakness or Diffidence in those who are now for setting aside this Point as trifling, and which it will serve to no great Use which way soever it be determined. It signifies at least as much as his Lordship's Notion about Church-Communion signifies; insomuch that I will venture to tell his Lordship, that if there be no Truth in what he hath said in the one Case, there can be no Sense in what he hath said in the other.

C H A P. VI.

Of EXCOMMUNICATION.

IT having been shewn in the foregoing Chapter that none are qualified, to be received as Members of visible Communion, but those who hold the Faith of the Gospel; it may seem perhaps a very needless Thing to go about to prove, that those who having been received as Members of visible Communion upon their Profession of that Faith, shall afterwards openly depart from it, do thenceforward become unfit Members of visible Communion, and ought therefore to be denied the Tokens and Privileges of it. To receive into Communion, and to excommunicate, *i. e.* to put out of Communion, are Relatives; and certainly that which would have been a good Reason why a Man ought not to have been admitted at first, must be as good a Reason why he ought to be rejected afterwards. But because it is of late grown to be a very current Opinion among some Sorts of Men (for which too they pretend to have the Authority of the Scriptures on their side) that none ought to be rejected from visible Communion for opposing the Faith, but those who wickedly oppose it, or at least whose Errors from the Faith are owing to their own Carelessness; it is therefore necessary that this Point be distinctly and particularly enquired into; because if the Scriptures do plainly say thus much, or if it can by good Consequence be deduced from them, it will stand as an insuperable Objection against all that has been said, which, as you must have observed, ends in a very different and contrary Conclusion. If the Reasons against receiving Men into Communion, and for excluding them from Communion, be (as they necessarily must) the very same; 'tis plain that an Opposition to the Faith (*i. e.* a mere Opposition to the Faith) supposing it not to be a sufficient Warrant in the one Case, can be no sufficient Objection in the other; and a sufficient Warrant it cannot be, if the Scriptures do plainly teach, that none ought to be excommunicated for opposing the Faith, unless such Opposition be founded in Wickedness or Insincerity. But then on the other hand, it must be a very strong Presumption that the Scriptures do indeed no where teach any such thing, that it hath been already shewn, that in the Case of receiving Men into Communion they have made no such Distinction; and moreover, that it hath been made appear from the very Nature of visible Communion, that all who oppose the Faith are incapable of being really and truly Members thereof, whether they do it wickedly or not wickedly, sincerely or insincerely. However it must be allowed that the strongest Presumptions are of no Weight against plain and positive Proofs, and therefore the Matter ought well to be considered. And forasmuch as the Rule of St. Paul, *Tit. 3. 10, 11.* has mostly been insisted upon, I shall therefore first of all try what may be concluded from thence, and then add such other Observations as may be proper to set the Truth in a clear Light.

THE Words of the Apostle are these; *A Man that is an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition, reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, ὡς αὐτοκατακεῖτος, being condemned of himself.* Here the Apostle is conceiv'd to have asserted thus much, *viz.* That no one is a Heretick, nor consequently to be rejected as such, but he who is αὐτοκατακεῖτος, condemned of himself, *i. e.* (say some) condemned by his own Judgment and Conscience, in abetting or maintaining some Doctrine which subverts the Faith, merely with regard to Worldly Advantages, in Opposition to the Sense or Conviction of his own Mind. This Interpretation has several very considerable Advocates on its side; and the Reasons for it shall be considered by and by. But it may not be amiss to observe before-hand, that how greedily soever some unwary Assertors of

of the new Doctrine concerning Sincerity may have catch'd at this Meaning, it no more suits with their Purpose than it doth with mine. That those who err from the Faith are Hereticks, and ought to be rejected as such, provided they have erred for Want of Sincerity, they acknowledge; but this Interpretation makes the Formality of Heresy to lie, not in Error insincerely embraced, but in a wicked Opposition of that which a Man knows to be Truth. Consequently if a Man be in an Error, though it be for want of Sincerity, yet he is (according to this Interpretation) no Heretick, nor ought he to be rejected as a Heretick; for his very being in an Error supposeth that he doth not in maintaining that Error act in Opposition to the Sense and Conviction of his own Mind. This Interpretation therefore, I say, doth by no means agree with their Notion of Heresy; and to speak the Truth, I believe it will be a very difficult Matter to think of any one that will. But let them look to that; I go on to the Matter in hand; and in the Pursuit of it, I shall first of all examine those † Reasons which have been alledged to justify this Interpretation; and then propound to my Reader that which I take to be the true Sense of the Passage. And,

1. It is alledg'd, that he who sins against his own Convictions in what he doth maintain, or who oppugns any Doctrine which he knows to be true, "is a Heretick, according to the proper Import of the Word, because he doth properly CHUSE to be of his Opinion. Whereas the Judgment of the erroneous Person obliges him to hold his Error, it being not in our Power to believe otherwise than our Mind and Judgment doth inform us. So that in this Case we do not properly *αἰρεῖσθαι*, chuse what Opinion we will hold." But I conceive it will go but a very little Way towards determining the Sense of any Word to say what it doth properly signify, if there be another, though improper Meaning, which will serve as well. That an erroneous Person doth not properly, or by an Act of the Will, chuse his Opinion, is undoubtedly certain; but then it is no less certain, that improperly, or by an Act of the Judgment, he does chuse his Opinion, forasmuch as he is hereby led to give it the Preference above any other, which is a Sense that the Word *αἰρεῖσθαι* will very well bear. In a proper Way of speaking no Man can be said to chuse his Opinion, as this very Argument expressly allows; for it is in no Man's Power to believe otherwise than his Mind and Judgment doth inform him; that therefore which even he who oppugns those Doctrines which he knows to be true, chuses, is not his Opinion, but to act in Contradiction to his Opinion. But that the Formality of Heresy lies in this, the Criticism will by no means prove; and if (which I think is very reasonable) we interpret the Signification of the Adjective *αἱρετικός* according to a known Meaning of the Substantive *αἵρεσις*, the contrary will be most evident. For the Word *αἵρεσις* is very commonly used to denote any Sect or Party of Men; according to which Sense he who is the Leader or Abettor of any Sect will be *αἱρετικός*, from whatever Cause or Principle it happens that he is so. The Greeks, when they said that a Man was of such or such an *αἵρεσις*, were so far from supposing that he oppugned those Doctrines which he knew to be true, that ordinarily they supposed (what all the World commonly supposeth) that every Man embraced the *Dogmata* or Tenets of that Sect which he professed himself to be of; nor (that I may just take Notice of it by the way) did they in the Use of this Word ever make it any Part of their Consideration whether these Tenets were embraced sincerely or insincerely. So far therefore as we can learn from the Import of the Word, or at least for ought that the Import of the Word shews to the contrary, ALL were Hereticks in the Apostle's Sense, who were the Leaders or open Abettors of any Sect, in Opposition to the Apostolick Doctrine.

† Consult Dr. Whitby on the Place.

2. It is farther alledg'd, that he who sins against his own Convictions in what he doth maintain, "is most properly a Heretick in the Scripture-Sense, which still ascribeth to such Men something relating, not to the Error of their Judgments, but the Perverseness of their Wills, and the Corruption of their Affections; as that they designed not to *serve the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own Bellies*; that they *turned away from the Truth, supposing that Gain was Godliness, &c.*" Now to this I answer: First, That admitting it to be true, that a perverse Will and corrupt Affections are essential to the Notion of Heresy, this has no Tendency to justify this Interpretation; for every one knows that a perverse Will and corrupt Affections (and particularly a covetous and worldly Mind) may as well be the Instruments of leading Men into Error, or (which is the same thing as to the present Argument) of making them careless and unconcerned about the Truth, as of causing them to oppose what in their own Consciences they believe to be true. But, 2^{dly}, It does not follow, that because Hereticks are spoken of as Men of perverse Wills and corrupt Affections, that therefore a perverse Will and corrupt Affections are essential to Heresy. For Persons and Things are frequently spoken of as to what in Fact they are, and not as to what in the Nature of them they must necessarily be. The ancient Hereticks, *i. e.* those who at first opposed the Preaching of the Apostles, were generally very wicked Men; and the Scripture represents them therefore as such. But that Wickedness enters into the Notion of Heresy, will no more follow from hence, than it will follow that Idolatry enters into the Notion of an *Indian*, because *Indians* are described as Idolaters. This will be farther evident, if it be considered, 3^{dly}, in what Manner the Scripture speaks of those to whom it ascribes Wickedness and Corruption, in the Passages which are generally produced upon this Occasion; and concerning this it is observable, that they are very seldom expressly stiled Hereticks (for that Word rarely occurs in the sacred Writings) but for the most part described by a Periphrasis. Thus those concerning whom St. Paul says, that they *served not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own Bellies*, are not expressly called Hereticks, but *those who caused Divisions and Offences*; and those of whom he affirms that they *supposed Gain to be Godliness*, were those who *taught other Doctrines*. Would you think it proper now to argue from hence, that a perverse Will and corrupt Affections, or that a covetous and worldly Mind is essential to the Notion of one who causes Divisions and Offences, or of one who teaches other Doctrines? I hope not. Much less Reason then have you to argue that this Property enters into the Notion of Heresy. For the Argument being merely concerning the Use of a Word, the Inference therefore would have been more pertinent, had it been said of Hereticks expressly so call'd, that *they who are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own Bellies, &c.* And yet this is what the Apostle affirms of those who caused Divisions and Offences; a very manifest Proof that these and such like Passages of Scripture were intended to set forth, as I said before, what was generally the Property of Hereticks, not what necessarily must be so.

3. It is farther observed, that "the Apostle doth not say to Titus, do thou inform him (*i. e.* the Heretick) of his Error, but do thou admonish him of his Fault; which shews (say they) that the Crime lay not in his mistaken Judgment (for that can never be corrected by Admonition, but only by Instruction) but that it lay in the Irregularity of his Affections and the Perverseness of his Will." But those surely have a very singular Notion of *Admonition* (*νῆθεσία*) who think that it doth not imply Instruction, where Instruction is wanting. St. Paul tells the *Romans*, that he was *persuaded of them that they were full of Goodness, filled with all Knowledge, able also ἀλλήλους νῆθετεῖν, to admonish one another*. Rom. 15. 14. And at 1 *Thess.* 5. 12. he *beseeches them to know them which*—were over them in the Lord, καὶ νῆθετεῖν αὐτοὺς, and admonished them. And again, Eph. 6. 4. he gives this Charge to Parents, that they should bring up their Children

Children ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ Κυρίου, in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord. Who sees not that in these Places νουθεσία implies *Instruction*? There is indeed no other Difference between them than this, viz. that the former is a Word of more general Extent than the latter; *Instruction* implying no more than the informing or endeavouring to inform the Understanding, and *Admonition* (νουθεσία) as the very Force of the Greek Word shews, taking in the Use of all those Means which are proper to regulate the Mind, and make it better. *Admonition* then including *Instruction*, where *Instruction* is needful, it will not follow, because the Apostle hath not particularly and distinctly taken Notice of it, that therefore the Heretick, whom he exhorts *Titus* to reject, wanted no *Instruction*, or that his Judgment might not be erroneous. For the Direction may be conceived to carry this general Meaning, viz. That after repeated Trials unsuccessfully made to reform a Heretick (*i. e.* any one who should set up other Doctrines in Opposition to the Apostles) he should be rejected. But setting this aside the Observation is of no Weight. For it is not necessary to suppose that the Apostle in this Place intended to set forth the whole of what was to be done in reference to a Heretick, but only so much as peculiarly concerned the Bishop, to whom he was now giving Instructions for the due Execution of his Office. Now the convincing Gainsayers, the instructing those who oppose themselves to the Truth, being a Duty not peculiar to the Bishop, but common to every Pastor of the Church, the Apostle might well suppose this as a Thing already provided for, and upon this Supposition direct *Titus* only to admonish him, *i. e.* (if you chuse so to understand that Word) to give him a publick and formal Warning of his Fault, and of the Censures that would ensue in case he was not thereupon reclaimed from his Heresy. But,

4. THE main Argument is taken from the Force of those Words, which contain the Reason upon which the Apostle's Rule to reject a Heretick, after the first and second Admonition, is founded; in which it is expressly said of a Heretick, that he who is such is αὐτοκατάκριτος, condemned of himself; and the Inference rests upon these two Suppositions, viz. 1. That according to the Apostle, to be condemned of himself, is the essential Property of every Heretick: And, 2. That to be condemned of ones self, signifies in this Place to be condemned of ones own Judgment or Conscience; in reference to the Truth of any Doctrine maintained. Allowing, I say, these Principles to be good, there will be no room to deny the Conclusion. For 'tis very rightly observed by those who contend for this Sense of the Words, that "no Man who acts according to his Judgment, how erroneous soever it be, is [thus] self-condemned in that Action," and consequently upon these Principles no erroneous Person can be a Heretick. But the first of these Suppositions may very well be disputed, if you have no better Proof of it than this, viz. That the Apostle says of a Heretick, ὅτι ὁ τοιοῦτος, that he who is such or such a one is condemned of himself. For as I have just now observed the same Apostle says of those who caused Divisions and Offences, that οἱ τοιοῦτοι, such as these, served not the Lord Jesus, but their own Bellies; which will not prove that to serve his own Belly is the essential Property of one who causes Divisions. All that is necessarily implied in either Case is, that in Fact this was what most commonly happened; and there is no Absurdity in supposing that in giving a general Rule about rejecting Hereticks, the Apostle might mention such a Reason only as did most generally hold. This Place therefore of it self will not come up to an evident Proof of the Point in hand, even supposing that to be condemned of ones self does here signify to be condemned of ones own Judgment or Conscience. For if it were said that the Generality of those who at first opposed the Preaching of the Apostles, when the Evidence of the Gospel appeared in the strongest Light (whilst yet they professed themselves Christians) were Men who upon carnal Motives wilfully set themselves against the Truth, and so were condemned in their own Consciences, I know not how this could be disproved. Now if this be a true Answer,

it must also be a sufficient Answer; for this doth not suppose it to be essential to Heresy, that a Man be condemned of his own Conscience; nor that if a Man be a Heretick, and not condemned of his own Conscience, he ought not to be rejected; because there may be more Reasons why a Heretick ought to be rejected than one. But the great Mistake, I think, lies in the other Supposition, viz. that to be *condemned of ones self* does in this Place signify to be condemned of *ones own Conscience*, which is more at least than can be proved; there being, as I conceive, another and that a very natural Sense, which very well suits with the present Purpose. The Reader I hope will excuse my offering my own Conjecture, when I say that the Word *αὐτοκατάκριτος* seems here to be used *in sensu forensi*, as signifying one who stands condemned, not by *his own CONSCIENCE before God*, but by *his own MOUTH before Man*. One who condemns himself by confessing himself a Criminal, *i. e.* one whom the Law adjudges to be such, and upon whom therefore it pronounces Condemnation. For the clearing this Interpretation, let it be considered, that in ordinary Cases it was required, that antecedently to publick Admonition, the Crime of which any Man was accused, should be proved against him by the Testimony of competent Witnesses. Thus our Saviour directs, *Matth. 18. 15, 16. If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, — and will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the Mouth of two or three WITNESSES every Word may be established.* And thus St. Paul both prescribed and practised. *This is the third time I am coming to you, in the Mouth of two or three WITNESSES shall every Word be established. 2 Cor. 13. 1.* And again, *Against an Elder receive not an Accusation but under two or three WITNESSES. 1 Tim. 5. 19.* The Thing is indeed in it self highly reasonable and necessary. For it is absurd in a Judge to admonish a Man as an Offender, without sufficient Evidence that he is an Offender; which, because Men are ordinarily wont to endeavour to conceal their Faults, cannot therefore ordinarily be had without the Testimony of those who were Witnesses of the Fact, or of some overt Act which tends to the Discovery of it. The Adulterer and the Fornicator sins in secret, and does not make it his Business to publish his own Wickedness; here therefore there is need of Witnesses. But if a Man be a Heretick, *i. e.* if he be the Leader or open Abettor of any Sect in Opposition to the Apostolick Doctrine, the Necessity of Witnesses is manifestly superseded. In this Case he becomes his own Accuser, with his own Mouth proclaiming himself an Offender against the Order and Discipline of the Church, and so is self-condemned, in the same Sense in which a Prisoner at the Bar is said to be self-condemned, who by pleading guilty to his Indictment confesses himself an Offender against the Law of his Country. See now whether upon this Foot the Sense of the Passage will not be easy and natural. *A Man that is an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition, reject; i. e.* let a Heretick ONLY be twice admonished, and if after this he doth not reform let him be excommunicated. Why so? Why it follows in the next Words, *ΕΙΔΩΣ ὅτι ἐξέσπασται ὁ τοιοῦτος, &c.* because such a one publishing his own Fault, THOU THY SELF KNOWEST that he is subverted; the Reason is brought to shew, not why a Heretick should be excommunicated, but why the Bishop in such a Case should forthwith proceed to Admonition, without calling in that Evidence of the Fact which was usual in other Cases. And to this may well be applied what was said upon another Occasion; *what need we any Witnesses, for we our selves have heard of his own Mouth.*

It may be said perhaps that every Heretick was not always personally known to be such by the Bishop; and therefore that in such a Case, if the Heretick should have denied that he had taught any such Doctrines as he was charged with having taught, there would still have been Occasion for Witnesses, before the Bishop could rightly proceed to Admonition. But this is a Case which doth not well suit with the first Ages, when there was no Hazard run by denying the Truth, but great Inconveniences suffered by professing it. And it is
very

very hard to conceive by what other Motives he, who either through a misguided Conscience, or through Pride, Vain-glory, Covetousness, Worldly-mindedness, and the like, should have lifted himself into any Sect in Opposition to true Christianity, should not have been as forward to publish his Doctrines to a Bishop, or to an Apostle, as to any common Christian. The History of the New Testament affords no Instance of any such Reservedness, nor, so far as I remember, do any of the first Writers, who represent the Hereticks of those Times in general as Men insolent and bold, rather industrious to spread than careful to conceal their evil Opinions. However, this I think we may say with some Assurance, that it was a Case which very rarely happened, and a Case therefore which the Apostle doth not suppose, as indeed there was no need for him to suppose it, it being enough, as I said, to justify any general Rule, to assign such a Reason for it as will for the most part hold, leaving particular and uncommon Exceptions to private Discretion. Wherefore to proceed; As there is nothing in this Interpretation which is not agreeable to the Reason of the Thing; so, for ought that I can perceive, 'tis such an Interpretation as the Greek Word will very well admit of. *Ἀποκατάχειλος* no where occurs in the sacred Writings but in this single Place, and therefore we must judge of its Signification by the Use of other Words, which bear a near relation to it. Now this is certain, that *Κεῖνω* signifies to *accuse* as well as to *judge* or *condemn*, and accordingly *Κεῖσις βλασφημίας* is a *railing Accusation*. *Jude* 9. But this perhaps may not be thought decisive, because Compounds often vary from the Sense of their Originals. We must therefore consider whether *Κατάκεινω* will bear a Sense agreeable to this Interpretation; and concerning this we may observe, that those are frequently said *κατάκρινεν*, not only who do themselves as Judges determine or pass Sentence of Condemnation upon any Man, but those also who do indirectly or more remotely condemn a Man, by being in some respect or other an Instrument, in vertue whereof Condemnation is pronounced. Thus, *Heb.* 11. 7. it is said of *Noah*, that *Κατέκρινε ὁ Κόσμον*, *he condemned the World*, i. e. being a Preacher of Righteousness, and foretelling the approaching Vengeance of God against the World, which the World regarded not, he became the Means or Instrument of its Condemnation. But what comes nearer to our Purpose yet is, that those particularly through whose Evidence or Testimony Condemnation follows are said *κατάκρινεν*, to condemn. Thus, *Matth.* 12. 41. and *Luke* 11. 32. *The Men of Nineveh shall rise up in the Judgment with this Generation (καὶ κατακρίνῃσιν αὐτήν) and shall condemn it.* How so? Why certainly not by passing Sentence upon them, but by standing as Witnesses against them, that they were inexcusable in their Disobedience. For thus it follows, *for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here; i. e.* their Repentance under those lesser Means will be a convincing Proof, that these greater which are now offered are abundantly sufficient, and consequently that those who reject these Means are utterly without Excuse. If then he who in general is the Means or Instrument of another's Condemnation, and particularly who is in some respect or other an Evidence or Witness against him, is said *κατάκρινεν*, to condemn him; it will follow by Parity of Reason, that he who in any respect bears Witness against himself, and so becomes the Instrument of his own Condemnation, may be said to be *αὐτοκατάκριτος*, *condemned of himself*. *Ἀφ' ἐαυτοῦ κατακρινόμενος* and *αὐτοκατάκριτος* are Words denoting one and the same Thing. Now St. Paul says expressly of him who condemned another for a Fault of which he himself was guilty, that he did *ἐαυτὸν κατάκρινεν* (*Rom.* 2. 1.) i. e. he did *virtually* or *more remotely* condemn *himself* by bearing Witness against himself that the Crime of which he was guilty deserved Condemnation. And thus the *unthrifty Servant*, *Luke* 19. 22. was *ἐκ τῆς σωμαλῆς ἐαυτοῦ κρινόμενος*, *condemned out of his own Mouth*, because he hid up his Talent in a Napkin, when by his own Confession he knew that it would be required back again with Usury. Both these Forms of speaking agree in the general Idea of a Man's standing as an Evidence against himself, though the particular Way or

Manner of doing it is different in each. Now for a Man to confess a Fact with which he is charged, and which the Law condemns, is one, and a very effectual Way of standing as an Evidence against himself, and consequently the Heretick who does this may very fitly be said to be self-condemned.

WITH all due Submission therefore to the Reader's Judgment, I shall leave this with him, as what I take to be the true Sense of the Passage, only observing this, that the learned Dr. *Hammond* has given another Interpretation, which if he likes better, it will suit my Purpose as well. But whatever be the true Interpretation of it, that which makes the being condemned in his own Conscience, by maintaining any Doctrine which he knows to be false, to be the specifick Character of a Heretick, certainly is not so. For if none are Hereticks but those who sin against their own Convictions in what they maintain, and consequently none but such to be rejected as Hereticks, this will remove from the Reach of Ecclesiastical Censure all those who either through Pride, or a careless Neglect of the proper Means of Instruction, do err from the Truth. For he who thus falls into Error, doth yet embrace it under the Notion of Truth, and consequently he doth not in what he maintains, sin against his own Convictions, as I have before observed. But that the proud and negligent Opposers of God's Word, who are by all acknowledged to be under his Wrath, should (even supposing that they could certainly be known) have a Right to continue in the Communion of the Church, is absurd, and therefore that Interpretation which supposes it must be so too. I will add, that if no Man ought to be separated from Communion for maintaining Doctrines destructive of the Faith, unless he maintains those Doctrines against his own Convictions, he ought not to be separated for any other Fault but under the same Qualification: for the Reason must in all Cases be the same. Now not to mention that a Man may be guilty of some of the foulest Vices, and yet not be self-condemned in so doing (in this Sense of Self-condemnation) not to mention this I say, I know of nothing in which Men, how much soever they may be in the wrong, are so apt to flatter themselves into a very firm Persuasion that they are in the right, as in judging between themselves and their Neighbours. It is the more proper to instance in this, because this is the very Case which was put by our Saviour in the general Grant of the Power of Excommunication to his Church, *Matth.* 18. 15, 16. And what does our Lord say to this? Does he give it in Charge, that if any Man's Brother should trespass against him, and should refuse upon the Church's Admonition to repair the Injury, that the Church should consider whether in this Act the Offender had sinned against his own Convictions? Ridiculous! This had been to evacuate his own Ordinance, seeing that if the Church were a competent Judge in this Case (which now it is certainly not, and which for some Reasons that shall hereafter be mentioned I do not believe it was even then) there are few Offenders of this Sort that can be brought to such a Sense of themselves. But what does he say? Why he leaves it entirely to the Church to determine between the two contending Parties, and with respect to him whom she should adjudge to have done his Brother Wrong, pronounces peremptorily and without Reserve, *if he will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen Man and a Publican.*

To return: If the Interpretation above laid down be admitted of (and I should hope that it will appear at least not improbable) it entirely takes away all Pretence from those who say that no sincerely erroneous Person is a Heretick, in the Scripture Sense of that Word, as well as from those who say absolutely that no erroneous Person is such. For according to this Interpretation ALL are Hereticks who oppose the Apostolick Doctrine, and ALL to be rejected as such, for a Reason which respects neither Sincerity nor Insincerity. Now for a farther Confirmation of this Point, and to shew that according to Scripture Rule ALL Persons, without Distinction, who depart from the Faith, are to be

be rejected from the Privileges of visible Communion, give me leave to make the following general Observations, viz.

1. THAT all the Scripture Directions relating to this Particular are conceived in the most absolute and unlimited Terms. Those whom St. Paul, Rom. 16. 17. beseeches Christians to avoid, are (indefinitely) *THEY which caused Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which they had learned.* Those whom, 2 Thess. 3. 6. he commands them to withdraw themselves from, are *EVERY Brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the Tradition which he had received.* The same Apostle, Verse 14. of this Chapter, thus ordains: *If ANY Man obey not our Word by this Epistle, note that Man, and have no Company with him.* St. John also lays down this general Rule, 2 John 10. *If there come ANY unto you and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your House, neither bid him God speed.* These are the Scripture Directions, among which there is not one which says, or so much as insinuates, that those only should be separated from the Fellowship of Christians, who did wickedly or insincerely depart from the Faith, and the rest, who did the same Thing heartily and sincerely, should be retained within the Bosom of the Church. No, Separation is denounced against all, without Exception, who should oppose the Apostolick Tradition, from whatsoever Cause or Principle it might happen that they opposed it. 'Tis true indeed (and I need not, nor have I any Inclination to dissemble it) that those who departed from the Faith are here and elsewhere generally represented as wicked Men, and that upon this Account they are also declared unworthy to be received as Brethren. For therefore doth St. Paul beseech the Romans to mark those which caused Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which they had learned, and avoid them; BECAUSE they that were such served not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own Bellies. And what does all this amount to? Not surely to a Proof, that had such Persons departed from the Doctrine of the Gospel in the Honesty and Sincerity of their Hearts, they were not to be avoided; for this Reason is not always assigned where the same Command is given, nor is it the only one assigned. Their Wickedness was doubtless a very good Reason why they ought to be avoided; but it follows not from hence that they ought not to have been avoided but for that Reason; for the Reasons why those who depart from the Faith ought to be avoided are diverse, and there is one of them in particular to which this very Reason has a farther Regard, as I am now going to shew you. For it will now be proper to observe,

2. THAT as the Scripture Directions for separating from those who oppose the Doctrines of the Gospel are absolute and universal, so the Reasons which the Scripture assigns for this Practice are such as will, one or both of them, subsist, whether a Man wickedly opposes the Truth or heartily embraces Error; and again, whether he embraces Error with Sincerity, i. e. (for so the Word is now used) after having carefully made Use of the proper Means of Instruction, or without Sincerity. These Reasons I say will, one or both of them, subsist; for the Scripture mentions but two, to which all the rest are reducible, viz. 1. The Shame and Conviction of Offenders; and, 2. The Preservation of the Body of Christ from the Infection of their Doctrines. The first of these is mentioned by St. Paul, 2 Thess. 3. 14. *If any Man obey not our Word by this Epistle, note that Man, and have no Company with him, THAT HE MAY BE ASHAMED;*

† Πλεῖστα χαιρεῖν. Solita in Epistolis salutatio—nec tantum in Epistolis sed in congressibus & allocutionibus quotidianis, præsertim matutinis, eadem forma a Græcis usurpata est. De quâ familiari salutatione intelligenda est illa Sancti Johannis Cautio, Ep. 2. de seductore χαιρεῖν αὐτὸν μὴ λέγε. Pearson. Annot. ad Ep. Ignat. ad Smyrn. p. 6. By this you see the Strictness of this Prohibition; that a Heretick was not to be vouchsafed so much as the lowest Token of Civil Familiarity, because no Familiarity was to be held with him. And this is the Purpose of those other Passages of St. Paul here cited; which therefore concludes a fortiori that such were not to be admitted to the Tokens or Privileges of religious Fellowship.

and the second is spoken of in the aforecited Passage in his Epistle to the *Romans*, where the Reason given for avoiding those who caused Divisions is expressly this, that such as these *by their good Words and fair Speeches deceived the Hearts of the Simple*. And to this Reason the foregoing Words, *for they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own Bellies*, have a very manifest Reference; for this is just as if the Apostle had said, "I beseech you to take especial Care not to have any Fellowship or Correspondence with those, who by their novel Doctrines cause Divisions in the Church; for such as these, though they put on an outward Form of Godliness, and make large Pretensions of Zeal for Christ and his Gospel, yet in truth they serve him not, but their own carnal Lusts; and thus honest and well-meaning Persons are seduced and led astray by them." The Concern which the Apostle here expresses, was not lest these Deceivers should make others as carnally-minded as themselves (for they appeared to be quite another Sort of Men than indeed they were) but lest that Shew of Piety which they put on whilst they were yet carnal, should prove a Means of reconciling those to their pernicious Doctrines, who were more apt to be influenced by the good Qualities of the Teacher, than careful to consider and judge of the Nature of what was taught them. And that this Concern for the Safety of those who were yet sound in the Faith, was the main Reason of those frequent and earnest Exhortations to avoid those who taught other Doctrines, which we meet with in the Epistles, is farther evident from what the same Apostle says, *2 Tim. 2. 16. But shun profane and vain Babblings, i. e. *avoid or withdraw thy self from those who babble profane and vain Things; or, which is all one, from those who teach any thing which is contrary to the Doctrine thou hast received.* For the βέβηλοι κενοφωνία (*1 Tim. 6. 20.*) are opposed to ἡ ἀληθινή λαθὴκη, the *Depositum*, which is the same with the ὑποτύπωσις ὑγιαίνοντων λόγων, the *Form of sound Words* (*2 Tim. 1. 13.*) and both signify that Doctrine which was delivered by the Apostles. For what Reason now was *Timothy* to shun such as these? Why you have it Verse 17. *Their Word will eat as doth a Canker*; and mentioning *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, who concerning the Truth had erred, and overthrown the Faith of some, the Apostle presently adds, *But in a great House,* (by which is adumbrated to us the Church of Christ) *there are not only Vessels of Gold and of Silver, but also of Wood and of Earth, and some to Honour and some to Dishonour. If a Man therefore PURGE HIMSELF from THESE (i. e. from these Vessels of Dishonour, such as were Hymeneus and Philetus) he shall be a Vessel unto Honour,—prepared unto every good Work.* The Greek Words are these, εἰάν τις ἐκκαθάρῃ ἑαυτὸν, i. e. if any one who (as thou art) is set over the Church of God, and is entrusted with Authority for this very End, shall put away from himself, and consequently from the Church, these vain Babblers, &c. For Καθαίρειν is a known Word for Excommunication; and thus it is used, *1 Cor. 5.* where St. Paul having exhorted them to excommunicate the incestuous Person, gives this Reason, *Ver. 6. Know ye not that a little Leaven leaveneth the whole Lump?* And thus inforces his Exhortation, *Ver. 7. ἐκκαθάρατε οὖν ἡ παλαιὰν ζύμην, PURGE out therefore the old Leaven, that ye may be a new Lump, &c.* which he explains afterwards, *Ver. 9. by μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι τοῖς πόρνοις, the not keeping Company with Fornicators.* These Fornicators were the old Leaven that were to be purged out, to the end that the Lump, i. e. the intire Body of Christians might remain unleavened, i. e. untainted by their wicked Practices; and so in like Manner were the Preachers of strange Doctrines also to be purged out, that those who were sound in the Faith might be ἡτοιμασμένοι, fitted or set in order to every good Work, which implies, that unless these were purged away they would be in great Danger of being overthrown. This is the Sense of these

* To shew that this is the true Sense of ἀμείωσας, it may not be amiss to set down the following Passage out of *Lucian*, Φιλοσόφῳ δὲ εἰς τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ ἄκων ποτὶ ἐν ὁδῷ βαδίζων ἐπύχῳ, ὥπως ὀκτραπήσομαι ἢ ΠΕΡΙΣΤΗΣΟΜΑΙ ὥσπερ τὰς λυτῆρας τῶν κυνῶν. *Hermotim. in fine.* See also Dr. *Hartman's* Note upon the Place.

Passages, which the Consideration of the Context with respect to both naturally leads me to. Wherefore these being the Ends which the Scripture assigns for the Exercise of the Discipline of Excommunication, 'tis plain that it was intended to be exercised upon all, without Distinction, who should depart from the Faith; because where the Reason of any Discipline holds with respect to all, the Discipline it self ought to be applied to all. Now as to the first of the two Reasons before mentioned, *viz.* the Shame and Conviction of the Offender, it holds, both with respect to those who wickedly oppose the Truth, and to those who carelessly embrace Error, to whom the being separated from the Body of Christians, with its natural Consequences, may be a proper Means of bringing them to a just Sense of themselves. With respect to the sincerely Erroneous indeed it cannot hold, because these are already supposed to have done their best, and consequently can be under no Want of any such Method to awaken their Consideration. But when a Thing is intended for more Purposes than one, 'tis enough to inforce the Use of it if any of them can be served by it. Now therefore as to the other, and most principal Reason for Excommunication which respects the Church or whole Body of Christians in general, 'tis plain that this holds with respect to all, and to the sincerely Erroneous more strongly than to any of the rest. For by how much the more honest and conscientious a Man is in his Opinions, the more forward and industrious will he be in propagating them to others; because to impart to others that Knowledge which we our selves judge to be beneficial, is that which Conscience directs us to. The evil Effects therefore of Errors from the Faith will not in this respect be less, but more and greater when they are embraced sincerely, than when they are embraced insincerely. So that one great End of taking away unsound and rotten Members being to preserve the rest of the Body from Infection, 'tis plain that there can be no Reason in this Case to stay to consider from what inward Principle or Disposition it has happened that a Man is departed from the Faith, any more than there is Reason for a Physician, when a Limb is so far distemper'd as to indanger the whole Animal Oeconomy, to consider by what Defect in the Constitution the Disease was first occasioned, before he will advise the cutting it off. This indeed is a Circumstance which, without doubt, God will have Regard to in passing his Sentence; but it is not a Circumstance which the Church, if she were qualified for it, ought to have any Regard to in passing hers. But,

3. WHETHER a Man who opposes the Truth, does at the same time oppose the Sense and Conviction of his own Mind; and again, whether he who embraces Error, embraces it sincerely or insincerely, are Cases which the Governours of the Church in any Age (not excepting even the Apostles themselves) were not ordinarily qualified to judge of; the Consequence of which must be, that the Scriptures in giving Directions about the Use of Excommunication (which I shall shew to be an ordinary Act of Discipline) could not mean to lay the Governours of the Church under any Obligation to consider these Cases. For give me leave to ask in the first place, By what Means shall these Cases be distinguished? Must we wait till those who oppose any Doctrine of Christianity do confess either their own Wickedness or their own Insincerity? This is absurd, because it supposes that the Scriptures have laid down such Rules concerning Offenders, as that it shall depend merely upon the Will and Pleasure of those Offenders, whether the Discipline enjoined by them shall at any time be executed or not. Or shall we judge from their known Behaviour in other respects? This is precarious; for it does not follow that because a Man is wicked or immoral in his Behaviour, therefore he maintains this or that particular false Doctrine, in Opposition to the Sense or Conviction of his own Mind; nor does a careful Use of the proper Means of Instruction necessarily imply the same Care and Diligence in every other Part of his Conversation. So far therefore as I am able to judge, these Cases are CERTAINLY to be distinguished no otherwise than by Inspira-

tion, *i. e.* by the Revelation of God, discovering the inward State of the Mind of the Offender; which is a Privilege not ordinarily vouchsafed, even to the Apostles themselves. I say not ordinarily; for that sometimes or upon certain Occasions they had it, is not to be denied. For thus it was that St. *Peter* was informed of the Treachery of *Ananias*. Acts 5. 3. And thus (as I am ready enough to believe) that St. *Paul* no sooner saw the *impotent Man*, than he knew that he had Faith to be healed, *i. e.* that he had that Faith, which made him a proper Subject whereupon to exercise the miraculous Power of Healing. But 'tis easy for any one who reads the Scriptures to discern, that ordinarily the Apostles judged of the inward Dispositions of Men by the same Rule, and no other than that, by which all Mankind judges of them, *i. e.* by their outward Actions. Accordingly we find that they were imposed upon, as well as others, by the Craft and Insincerity of those with whom they had to do; as in the Case of *Simon the Sorcerer*, whom *Philip* (a Man full of the Holy Ghost) baptiz'd, though his Heart was not right before God, yea, though he was in the Gall of Bitterness, and in the Bond of Iniquity. Acts 8. This was St. *Peter's* Testimony of him; and how did St. *Peter* know it? Why, as any other Man would have known it, by his offering Money for the Gifts of the Holy Ghost; for upon this it was that he presently observed to him, *I perceive that thou art in the Gall of Bitterness*. And what else does the Manner by which the Apostles proceeded, in appointing *Matthias* to be Copartner with them in the Apostleship, and that Prayer, *Thou, Lord, which knowest the Hearts of all Men, &c.* recorded Acts 1. what else, I say, does it shew, than that they themselves knew not which of the two, *i. e.* whether he or *Barnabas* was best qualified by his inward Dispositions for that Office? Forasmuch then as the Spirit did not constantly discover the inward Dispositions of Men, even to the Apostles themselves, it is not reasonable to suppose that such a Discovery was constantly made to any of those whom they appointed as Governours under him, and with whom they entrusted the Power of Excommunication. In truth, we have no Evidence from Scripture that this Privilege was at any time vouchsafed to such; for though we read of *Ἀγνοεῖς πνευμάτων*, the *discerning of Spirits*, which was bestowed upon some in the Church at that time, yet it does not appear that by this is meant the Power of knowing Mens Hearts by Revelation. Interpreters have understood it as signifying the miraculous Power of distinguishing true Revelations from false, and it will be very hard to prove that it implies any thing else. But let us put the ordinary Governours of the Church, such as *Timothy* and *Titus* were, upon the same Foot with the Apostles in this respect, by supposing that upon some Occasions the Spirit did reveal to them the inward Dispositions of Men. Yet since the Spirit did not constantly and upon all Occasions do this, the Point will still be, whether he did it whenever the Case of Heresy came before them, as the Ground upon which they were to proceed, either in denouncing or not denouncing the Sentence of Excommunication. And that he did not, is evident enough even from hence, that the Apostles in giving them Directions about the Exercise of Excommunication, have not so much as once referred them to any such Gift. The Directions, as you have seen, run in the same absolute and unlimited Terms that they must have run in supposing there had been no such Gift, which is a Thing very hard to be accounted for, if this Gift was indeed common to them all, if it was given too for the very End of Ecclesiastical Discipline, as that without which, in Cases of this nature, Excommunication could not rightly and lawfully be inflicted. The Apostles were very careful to advise Church-Governours, that no Man should be excommunicated as an Offender, without the Testimony of two or three Witnesses, proving some Fact or other against him worthy of the Punishment, except (say I) in the Case of Heresy, which (according to MY Notion of a Heretick) supersedes the Necessity of Witnesses. And if what others say be true, that no Man is a Heretick, nor consequently to be rejected as such, but he who either wickedly opposes the Truth, or insincerely embraces Error;

Error; if these Cases are not certainly to be known, but by the Testimony of the Spirit declaring the inward Dispositions of Men; if farther, the then Governours of the Church had the Testimony of the Spirit, on purpose to enable them to distinguish these Cases, would not the Apostles, think you, have been as careful in the Case of an open Departure from the Faith, to have directed them to this Testimony of the Spirit, as they were in other Cases to direct them to the Testimony of Men? But the Point is now, I think, come to this, *viz.* Whether Excommunication, with respect to those who should depart from the Faith, was intended as an Act of Discipline, which should be of constant and standing Use in the Church, or whether it was to be peculiar to the first Ages. For that the Gift of knowing the inward Dispositions of Men by Revelation was peculiar to the first Ages, is and must be allowed on all Hands, because the Governours of the Church now have it not, nor have they had it for a great many Ages backward. If then this Gift was peculiar to the first Ages, 'tis plain that this Act of Discipline, which (as it is pretended) is founded upon this Gift, must also have been peculiar to the first Ages; and this is the Thing, I conceive, which is now aimed at, even the divesting the present Governours of the Church of a Right or Power to excommunicate Men on the Account of Errors from the Faith, and confining their Censures to open Immoralities. But he that will take upon him to say that the excommunicating Men for Errors from the Faith, was an Act of Discipline peculiar to the first Ages, may as well say that Preaching and Baptizing were peculiar to the first Ages. For after the same Manner in which the Apostles were commanded to preach the Gospel, and to receive those who should embrace the Faith into the Communion of the Church by Baptism, after the same Manner did the Apostles command others to exclude those from the Communion of the Church who denied that Faith which they had once embraced. The Directions for preaching the Gospel and baptizing run thus: *Go ye and preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE: Go ye and baptize ALL NATIONS.* And the Rules for Excommunication, as I have shewn, run in the same general Terms (to which there is no Restriction any where given) *mark THOSE which cause Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and AVOID them; WITHDRAW yourselves from EVERY Brother that walketh disorderly, &c.* If you say that the Ends of Preaching and Baptizing shew them to be standing Ordinances, I say the same of Excommunication, the Ends whereof have already been set down, and are evidently such as enforce the Use of the Means at one time as well as at another. Excommunication is certainly as proper a Method to bring Offenders to a just Sense of themselves now as it was at the first, and the Danger of continuing those within the Communion of the Church who deny the Faith is not less now than it was from the Beginning. So that instead of arguing (as some do) that because, according to Scripture Rule, none are to be excommunicated for denying the Faith, but those who deny it either wickedly or insincerely; and because these Cases cannot certainly be known without Inspiration, which is no standing Gift, therefore Excommunication, with respect to those who deny the Faith, is no standing Act of Discipline in the Church; I say, instead of arguing in this Manner, I reason, I think more rightly, thus: That because it very plainly appears from the Scripture, that the Excommunication of those who deny the Faith was intended to be a standing Act of Discipline in the Church; and because the Cases aforementioned are such as the Church in its ordinary State cannot certainly judge of, therefore the Church is not bound by any Scripture-Rule to consider these Cases, but may and ought to excommunicate all who deny the Faith, upon whatever inward Principle or Disposition it be that they deny it.

4. As a Confirmation of all that has been offered under this Head, give me leave to appeal to the Practice of the Church in all Ages, which appears plainly to have been this, that as none were at first received into the Church by

Baptism, but those who professed a right Faith, so all who afterwards denied the Faith were as constantly shut out from the Church, notwithstanding any Plea that might be offered in either Case from the Honesty and Sincerity of Mens Intentions. I will not pretend to say that Antiquity affords not one single Instance to the contrary, for I am well aware of the Case of *Synesius*, who was not only baptized, but what is more, admitted into Holy Orders, whilst yet he professed that he could not believe the Doctrine of the Resurrection.* But, as Mr. *Bingham* has truly observed, † the Instance was singular, and never made a Precedent, nor drawn into Imitation, the general Practice of the Church being to examine Mens Orthodoxy before their Ordination, and I will add also, before their Admission into the Church by Baptism. How little Weight this Observation will have with some Sorts of Men, I am not ignorant; but to me I confess this is an incontestable Evidence (as it must be, I think, to all reasonable and impartial Judges) that the Discipline of the Church, with respect to those who denied the Faith, was not originally exercised with any Manner of Regard to the inward Dispositions of Men. And in Reason one would suppose, that the Church is no more concerned to inquire into the Sincerity of Mens Hearts, than the Civil Magistrate. She sits as a visible Judge as well as he. She judges of the outward Actions of Men, considered as affecting the good Order and Government of the Body Spiritual, as he does the same consider'd as affecting the good Order and Government of the Body Politick. The Laws of the Gospel are her Rule, as the Statutes of the Realm are his. When these Laws are openly violated, she has a Right to proceed against the Offender as the Gospel directs, *i. e.* to exclude him from her Communion; And this Sentence of hers is no more to be overruled by any Plea of Conscience, than the Sentence of the other. 'Tis true, the Church offends when she excommunicates any for an undue Cause, *i. e.* when she excommunicates those who have not transgressed the Laws of the Gospel; And so does the Civil Magistrate, when he punishes any who have not transgressed the Laws of the Commonwealth; yet as his Sentence, though undeservedly passed, is not reverfable by any Inferior Members of the Civil Society, so neither is the Sentence of the Church reverfable by any Inferior Members of the Society Ecclesiastical. Both Sentences are definitive with respect to the present State of the Offenders, and the wrong Judgment shall not be accounted for, till they and their Judges shall appear together before the Tribunal of God.

As this is the only Foot upon which the Right of Excommunication can be maintained consistently with sound Sense, so I am persuaded it answers to the Practice of the Church in all Ages. Many Instances we have from the Beginning, of Persons excommunicated for Erroneous Opinions; but what Instance can we find in all Antiquity, where the Governours of the Church have made it any part of their Consideration, whether those Errors were embraced sincerely or insincerely? In truth, were the Church to enter upon such an Inquiry, she would act a very ridiculous Part; and to say that she is bound to enter upon such an Inquiry, is in Effect to deny that in Cases of this Nature she has any Power to excommunicate. For there is plainly no Difference between saying that the Church hath no Power to excommunicate, and saying that the Church hath Power to excommunicate, but under such Circumstances, as it is in the Nature of the Thing impossible she should judge of.

* *Evagrius*. Lib. 1. Cap. 15.

† *Orig. Ecclesiast.* Book 4. Chap. 3. Sect. 3.

CHAP. VII.

Wherein the foregoing Principles are shewn to be agreeable to the Sense of our Church in her 20th Article.

THE Result of the whole is this: That Faith, *i. e.* the Belief of certain Points revealed by Christ, being necessary to a true and real Fellowship with him; it is the Business of Church-Governours to set forth what these Points are, and that their Decisions must be the Rule, by which it must be determined who are and who are not qualified to be entrusted with the publick preaching of the Word, and to be received or continued as Members of visible Communion. As this is the general Ground upon which the Church of *England* is established, and without which no Church can possibly subsist; so from these Principles it will be easy to ascertain the true Extent of that Claim which she makes in her 20th *Article*, where it is declared, that *the Church hath Authority in Controversies of Faith*. By an *Authority in Controversies of Faith*, nothing else can be understood, than an Authority to settle or determine Controversies of Faith. In what Sense then it may be asked hath the Church this Authority? Why certainly not in this, that she in vertue of her Decisions can alter the Nature of Things, and make that to be an Article of Faith, which the Gospel hath not made so, nor that she can bind Men to receive any Doctrine as an Article of Faith, which they in their own Consciences believe not to be an Article of Faith; for these things are equally absurd and impossible. But in this Sense the Church has Authority in Controversies of Faith, *viz.* that she may, and ought to declare her Sense in all Controversies of Faith, which Declaration shall have this Effect, that those who cannot consent to any controverted Point in a Sense agreeable to this Declaration, are qualified neither to be admitted to the Office of publick Teachers, nor to be received as Members of visible Communion. The Declaration of the Church therefore in this Case is strictly and properly authoritative: for to admit to, and to reject from, either the Ministerial Office, or the Communion of the Church, are Acts of Authority; and it is in this Sense that Bishop *Burnet*, who was never suspected of being a Favourer of extravagant Claims, has explained this Article. "A Distinction, says he, is to be made between an Authority that is absolute, and founded on Infallibility, and an Authority of Order. The former is very formally disclaimed by our Church, but the second may be well maintained, though we assert no unerring Authority." He supposes you see, that the Authority here claimed is an Authority of Order only, which he afterwards thus explains. "When any Synod of the Clergy has so far examined a Point as to settle their Opinions about it, they may certainly decree that such is their Doctrine; and as they judge it to be more or less important, they may either restrain any other Opinion, or may require positive Declarations about it, either of all in their Communion, or at least of all whom they admit to minister in Holy Things. This is only an Authority of Order, for the maintaining of Union and Edification, and in this a Body does no more as it is a Body, than what every single Individual has a Right to do for himself. He examines a Doctrine that is laid before him; he forms his own Opinion upon it, and pursuant to that he must judge with whom he can hold Communion, and from whom he must separate."

I THOUGHT it proper to set down these Words, as what would shew on which side of the Question now in Dispute the Innovation lies, and that in the Opinion of one who well understood upon what Foot the Reformation was carried on, those very Principles are asserted in this Article of our Church,

which have of late been so much clamour'd against, as utterly stopping the Way against all Reformation. There are two Things which ought principally to be attended to in this Debate, *viz.* 1. The Nature and Extent of the Authority pleaded for; and 2. The Persons in whose Hands this Authority is lodged; in both which the Bishop has clearly determin'd on our side. As to the Persons in whose Hands the Authority is lodged, he says, that they are *the CLERGY* Synodically assembled, in Distinction from the *LAITY*; for he was not so weak as to argue with a later Bishop, that because the Church in the foregoing Article is defined to be a *Congregation of faithful Men, &c.* therefore the Sense of this Article is, that the *whole Congregation hath Authority, &c.* He knew well enough, that to say that *the Church hath Authority*, is, in common Construction the same Thing as to say, *there is in the Church Authority*, even as we say, *the State has Authority*, when we mean to ascribe Authority not to the whole Body, but to some particular Persons in that Body. But that which I principally insist upon is this; that in his Opinion our Church hath claimed the very same, and no greater Authority, than that which we now plead for, to wit, an Authority to declare her Sense upon any controverted Point, and to make her Declaration the Rule or Measure of admitting Men either to the Ministerial Office, or to Communion. With this Interpretation the following Words do very well agree; *And yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word written, &c.* Which Caution was intended to shew, that as the Decisions of the Church are (so far as Order and Discipline is concerned) a Rule to its Members, so the written Word of God is a Rule to the Church in making Decisions, which she cannot either carelessly neglect or wilfully contradict, without being false to her Trust, and usurping an Authority which Christ never gave her. This seems to me to be the plain Sense of the Article; and with this I put an End to this Treatise. I shall only add, that though the supporting of the Christian Faith is a Work which primarily and directly concerns the Governours of the Church, there is yet a Care belonging to the Civil Magistrate; but this Point does not fall within the Compass of my present Design, and is of Weight and Extent enough to challenge a particular Discourse.



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P R E F A C E

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C O N C E R N I N G

C I V I L G O V E R N M E N T,

Consider'd as it stands related to

R E L I G I O N.

W H E R E I N

The MAGISTRATE'S Right to support and encourage
TRUE RELIGION by Human Laws is asserted,
against the modern Pleaders for an absolute, unre-
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By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.

The Magistrate's Right to support and encourage
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THE
P R E F A C E.

THE late Controversies having led me to consider the Question concerning the Magistrate's Authority in Matters of Religion, I now offer my Thoughts of it to the World. The Usefulness of the Subject must be my Apology for publishing them now: and the Difficulty of it, my Excuse for not publishing them sooner. The one may invite the Attention of the Reader; The other certainly demands great Caution and Circumspection in the Writer: And if by delaying I have gained this Advantage, that the Book comes out the more perfect; I may likewise hope that, the Heat of Contention being now pretty well over, it may be read with the more Calmness and Impartiality.

THERE are two different Ways in which this Point may be handled. One considers the Magistrate's Authority as it is originally in it self, or abstracted from all Limitations which Revelation may have introduced: The other considers it as relative to the Authority of the Church, which, though it does not destroy the Magistrate's Authority, does yet direct it in many Cases, where Religion is concerned. I confine my self at present to the first of these, and in treating about it, have set down nothing but what appears to me to flow from evident Principles of Reason, and the general Experience of the World. I mean not here to promise Demonstration: You must expect none, because the Subject will admit of none. The Question is, What Course must the Magistrate take to support and encourage true Religion; for which he that should presume to lay down an universal, infallible Method, would deserve no other Regard than a Pretender who boasts that he has found out a never-failing Remedy to cure all Diseases. All we can say is, THAT is the best Method which will do most Good: And in judging even of this, so much will always depend upon the Tempers and Dispositions of Men (which can be reduced to no certain Rule) that perhaps it lies not within the Reach of the wisest Man on Earth, to say, with Assurance, precisely what it is. Room then here will be for cavilling, to those who are best pleased with finding Fault. But to those who are disposed to judge equitably, and will accept of such Proof as the Nature of the Thing will allow, I do not despair of giving this reason-

able Satisfaction; that if I shew them not the best Method, I shew them a good one, or at least a better than those Writers have shewn, who tell us, That the best Thing the Magistrate can do in this Case, is to do Nothing.

AFTER all I am sensible, that the ensuing Tract is so disproportion-ate to what the Subject might very well bear, that I venture not to give it any higher Title than that of an ESSAY; which I should be glad to see corrected or improved by any, who know how to profit ei-ther by what they like in it, or by what they do not.

T H E C O N T E N T S.

C H A P. I.

WHETHER it be possible for the Magistrate, by the Methods of Civil Admi-nistration, to promote the Interest of God's true Religion.

C H A P. II.

Of the Magistrate's Right to encourage true Religion; wherein is shewn, first, How this Right stands by, and under, the Law of Nature.

C H A P. III.

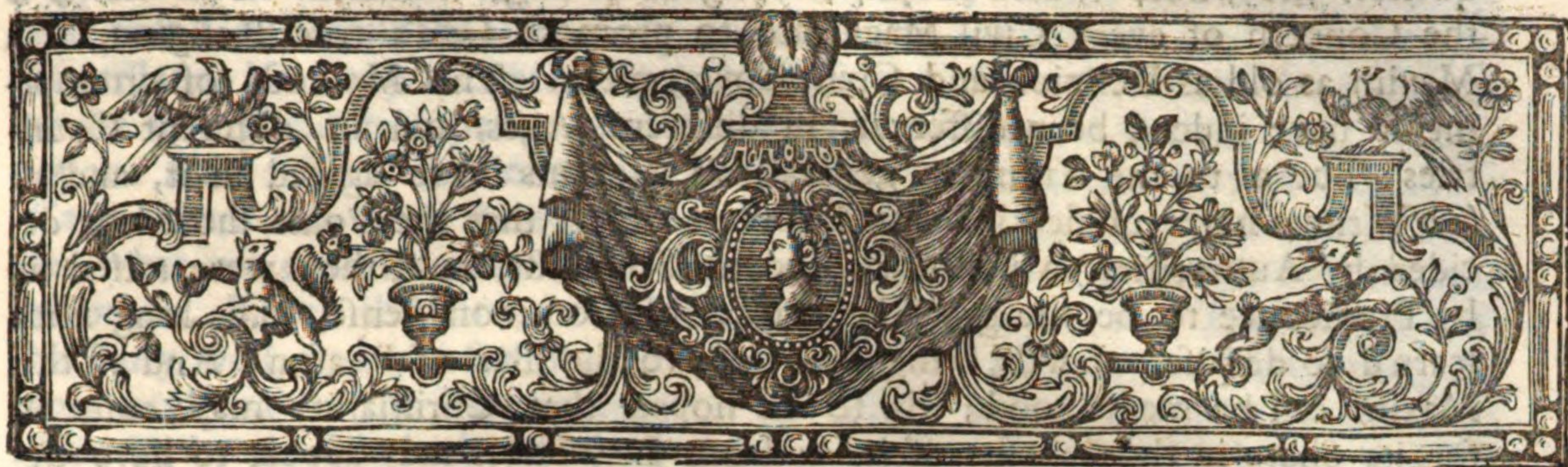
Of the Magistrate's Right to encourage true Religion; wherein is shewn, secondly, How this Right stands under the Gospel Revelation.

C H A P. IV.

Containing an Answer to the principal Objections.

C H A P. V.

Wherein the Authority of the Magistrate in Matters of Religion is more distinctly and particularly considered.



A
D E F E N C E
O F T H E
M A G I S T R A T E ' S R I G H T , & c.

The INTRODUCTION.

HA VING shewn in a former Treatise, what are the proper Methods of supporting Christianity, so far as it concerns the Governours of the Church; I now proceed to consider the same Point as it has Relation to the Office of the Civil Magistrate. As the Motive which led me to the former was the Vindication of our Ecclesiastical Constitution; so that which determines me to the latter, is the Justification of our Civil Establishment, which hath the same Adversaries to deal with: Those who have represented the one as destructive of the Christian Liberty, having also represented the other as an Encroachment upon Civil Right and Property, and no less an Invasion upon the Prerogative of Christ. To say the Truth, this seems to be the most material Part of the Controversy: not only as it is of a more nice and intricate Nature; but because the Right it pleads for seems to have made the most sensible Impression upon the Spirits of those who have of late appeared against us with so much Bitterness. For I can easily persuade my self that the Church might have been let alone in her Claims of Spiritual Powers, if, by the Favour of the State, she had not been vested with Civil Privileges.

I SHALL not pretend in this Place, to give the Reader an exact Draught of this New Scheme. If any one can want it after so much has been written upon the Subject, he will be able to frame one for himself, when he has viewed it in its main Branches, the Consideration of which is the Design of the following Discourse. It needs only to be remarked, that the Exception lies, not so much against any thing that is peculiar in our Legal Establishment, as against all such Establishments in general; *i. e.* it lies against all Right in the Magistrate to support Religion by his Civil Authority. I wonder not that those, who (if one might judge by their Conduct) seem to be for making a full End of the Church, should leave her as little Support from without, as they have left her from within: But surely it must appear very unaccountable to any thinking Man, that in a Point of so much Consequence,

quence, the whole World should so long have been mistaken. For that it is the Concern of every Civil Magistrate to promote God's true Religion, is a Maxim as old as Religion and Civil Government. The Methods of attempting it have indeed been different, in different Ages, and in different Countries: But as to the Thing in general, all Nations have agreed in it, and all (a) Writers have justified it. But I do not expect that the Point should be decided by Authorities, which our Modern Schemists, as if they were raised up by Providence to be the great Reformers of Common Sense, have long since learn'd to despise. I will bring the Case to the Bar of Reason: And if this Maxim can be made good; 'tis to be hoped that Christianity may come in for its Share in the Benefits of it, and our Legislators may appear to have deserved another Kind of Treatment than they have lately met with, on Account of the Privileges allowed us. But if not, we ought to be as ready to give up these Privileges, as others are desirous that they should be given up: for Christianity must not be supported, nor does it indeed want to be supported, by any Methods that are not justifiable.

C H A P. I.

Whether it be possible for the Magistrate, by the Methods of Civil Administration, to promote the Interest of God's true Religion.

THE general Point being now stated, it will be necessary, as a Preliminary to the whole, to resolve one very material Question: *viz.* Whether it be possible in the Nature of the Thing, for the Magistrate by the Methods of Civil Administration to promote the Interest of God's true Religion. It has of late been very strenuously maintained that it is not: And if this be true, the Dispute is at an End: it being absurd to suppose that any Thing should be a Matter of Right or Duty in the Civil Magistrate, which in the Nature of Things is absolutely out of his Power. Now the Foundation of this Notion is this; That the Magistrate (b) by all he can do, CAN only influence the outward Behaviour and Practice. Whereas, say they, true Religion consists not merely in any external Conformity to any particular Way of Worship, even though that Way be of Divine Appointment; but it consists in a Conformity to the Law of God, upon a true inward Principle, *i. e.* upon a Principle of Obedience to God, under (c) the Influence of the Motives of a Life to come. Whether the being influenced by the Motives of a Life to come be essential to the Notion of true Religion, I shall not now stay to inquire; because which Way soever this Point be determined, it cannot alter the State of the Question between us. That a true Inward Principle is essential to it there can be no Doubt; and consequently it must be granted that if it be not in the Magistrate's Power to encourage and promote this inward Principle, it is not in his Power to promote true Religion. This Difference therefore, I say, must first of all be decided; in doing which I must beg the Liberty of pursuing that Method which appears to me to be most natural, promising my Reader not to omit taking Notice of every material Objection as it falls in my Way.

RELIGION then (I say) in the Sense in which it is now to be considered, must be founded, 1. In the Knowledge of the Divine Will. And, 2. In a due

(a) Omnes qui de Republicâ aliquid lectu dignum scripsere, jus in Sacra non partem tantum Summi Imperii, sed etiam potissimam atque præcipuam vocant. *Grotius*, De Imp. Sum. Pot. Cap. 1. Sect. 8. Again, Nullâ in re magis elucescit vis Summi Imperii, quàm quòd in ejus arbitrio est, quænam Religio publicè exerceatur; idque præcipuum inter Majestatis jura, ponunt omnes qui Politica scripserunt. *Ibid.* Cap. 8. Sect. 2.

(b) See *Answ.* to the Representation. p. 160, 167, 172, 173, 178.

(c) *Ibid.* p. 173, and in many other Places.

Ch. I. *to encourage true RELIGION.*

Apprehension of the Weight of those Motives, by which it becomes reasonable that God should be obeyed in whatever he commands us. For he who understands his Duty and practises it because it is so, *i. e.* because he judges it to be fitting and reasonable, is in the most compleat and perfect Sense a Religious Man. Now the immediate, adequate, Cause of the former (in those Cases where our own Reason alone is not able to direct us) is Instruction; for what we cannot learn of our selves, we must be taught by the Information of others. But to the latter, something more is required. For a Man may know his Duty well, and yet for Want of due Attention to what he understands, be very negligent in the Performance of it. From hence therefore it follows; That if, by the Methods of Civil Administration the Magistrate may provide either that Instruction in the Knowledge of God's true Religion be the better administred; or that when duly administred it may have the greater Weight and Influence upon the Minds of Men; it must then be possible for the Magistrate to promote the Interest of God's true Religion. And that he may provide for both is as plain to me as any Thing can be. For he may provide for the better Administration of Instruction in the true Religion. 1. By providing a proper Maintenance for the Teachers of true Religion. 2. By endowing Publick Schools, and other Seminaries of good Learning, and Religious Education. Which Ways will become yet more effectual, 3. By prohibiting the same Methods, when they shall be made Use of to support any false Religion, in Opposition to the true. I inquire not now, how far all this is right and fitting: This must be consider'd in another Place. And 'tis a Caution which I must desire the Reader constantly to bear in his Mind, that my Business under this Head is to shew, not what the Magistrate may do in the Notion of Justice, but what he may do in the Notion of Natural Possibility. In this Sense then I say 'tis evident that the Magistrate may, by the several Ways above mentioned, provide for the better Administration of Instruction: the Tendency of which, since it is not merely to regulate the outward Behaviour, but also, and that primarily, to direct the Understanding to that true Knowledge of God, which lays the Foundation of a Religious Principle; That must therefore be false which hath been maintained absolutely and without Reserve, *viz.* that the Magistrate *by all he can do*, CANNOT promote true Religion, nor any more than influence the outward Behaviour. It would be ridiculous here to alledge that the true Religion under this State of the Case, is promoted by those who instruct, and not by the Magistrate. The direct, immediate Cause without Doubt is, and must be, Instruction. But then the Magistrate, through whose Means Instruction is administred, concurs to it as a principal, though more remote, Instrument: which is all that any one means or can mean, when he speaks of the Magistrate's Power to promote Religion by the Methods of Civil Administration.

THIS Point being duly attended to, the Reader will very easily perceive how far the Reasoning of our Adversaries upon this Head, comes short of the Matter under Consideration. For how does it appear that it is not in the Magistrate's Power, by all he can do, to promote true Religion, nor any more than to influence the outward Behaviour? Why the Substance of all that has been said amounts to thus much, and no more; to wit, That the Motives of this World (*i. e.* the Honours and Profits of this World on the one Hand, and the Hardships and Inconveniencies of this World on the other) can no more than influence the outward Behaviour. That is to say (for this is what they mean) if you want to bring a Man over to, or keep him stedfast in, the true Religion; the proposing to him, *v. g.* a Place at Court if he complies, or laying him under certain Penalties if he refuses, cannot reach his Heart so as to make him truly Religious, though it may occasion an outward Conformity. But what is this to the Purpose, supposing it to be true? I hope for all this, that good Salaries may procure good School-Masters; and good Benefices sound and Orthodox Pastors,

who 'tis likely may think it their Business to tell those who are under their Care, not how to get great Estates, but how to become Wise and Good; and may lead them to their Duties, not by applying the Motives of this World, but by enforcing the Motives of a Life to come. In considering the Use of Worldly Motives with Regard to Religion, we must not attend merely to the Effects they will have upon those who are under the immediate Advantages, or Disadvantages of them. We must extend our Thoughts to those Effects also, which they will produce remotely upon others, which (as will be shewn more fully afterwards) are of far the greater Consequence. If I pay a Man a yearly Stipend for instructing my Child, what I give is the Purchase of his Labour, Skill, and Industry; and the Scholar may surely make a good Use of what he learns, though the Master makes a bad one of what he receives. In like Manner, if a good Benefice has no Tendency to beget a right Faith in the Preacher; no Man will be so absurd as to say that his Doctrine (supposing it to be as it ought) has no Tendency to inform the Understandings, and regulate the Manners of his Hearers. As this is a Consideration obvious enough of it self; so it is by much too material to have been overlooked by the late Writers in this Controversy. But it will be proper to pursue the Point yet farther, and to consider the Effect of Worldly Motives, even upon those who are immediately under the Influence of them; by which it will more fully appear, how little Truth there is in what has been laid down with so much Assurance, viz. That Temporal Rewards and Punishments have no Tendency to beget any thing more than a mere external Conformity. We have been told (and by the way, we have only been told) that (d) *it is not in the Power of Men by ALL the good Things of this World put together, to encourage Religion in the ESSENTIALS of it, or (as it is expressed a little after) to create the Inward Essentials of Religion.* That (e) *the Effect of Worldly Motives is NONE AT ALL towards any Thing but OUTWARD BEHAVIOUR and PROFESSION; and that (f) Worldly Sanction NEVER made ANY ONE Man TRULY Religious.* These are strong Terms; and if the Meaning of them be that Temporal Motives are not disposed by any direct immediate Efficacy to beget the Inward Essentials of Religion; the Thing is indeed too plain to admit of any Deliberation. But it will answer the Purpose every whit as well, if indirectly or by any remote Efficacy they may operate this Way: And if our Adversaries mean to deny this; it will become them however to be less positive till they can find some good Reason to support their Opinion. For in this Sense so far is it from being true, that Temporal Motives never made any one Man truly Religious; that by God's Grace they have made many so: And I look upon them to be very proper Means in the Magistrate's Hand to secure the good Effect of Instruction, whilst they are a Bridle to Mens Passions, and give a seasonable Check to that Carelessness and Inconsiderateness which unqualifies them to receive the Impressions of Truth and Virtue. This Effect of Worldly Motives is easy enough to be discerned in other Cases, where Mens Private Views are not so nearly concerned; that is, where the Spirit of a Party, which is for the most part the Spirit of Contradiction, hath not blinded their Eyes. A Father, for Instance, applies Temporal Motives in the Management of his Child. To what End? Is it merely to regulate the outward Behaviour? No surely; A sensible Man will certainly answer in such a Case, that it is with a Design to mend his Manners and make him good. This I must own were a foolish Pretence upon our Adversaries Scheme: But as foolish as it is, he that was wiser than the wisest of them all, has told us that *the Rod of Reproof giveth Wisdom.* How so? Is Wisdom the Effect of Force? Has bodily Pleasure or bodily Pain any Tendency to convince the Understanding and reform the Heart? Whether it will be born or not, I shall make bold to appear on the Part of *Solomon* and say, Yes. But how? Why, not that the Smart of the Rod can

(d) *Ibid.* p. 149, 150.(e) *Ibid.* p. 170.(f) *Ibid.* p. 213.

reach the Conscience; nor that the Sugar-Cake which the Child eats digests it self into a Religious Principle: But the Case is (as I said just now) that by this Method you apply to the Passions and compose those Inward Tumults, which, so long as they prevail, obstruct the Influences of Natural Light, and by Consequence stop the Way to true Wisdom and Virtue. This I say is the proper Effect of Worldly Motives: Not that they do of themselves beget true Religion; but that they put Men into a fit Temper and Disposition to receive it: Not that they are at all proper to convince; but that they remove those Impediments by which Men are rendred incapable of Conviction.

THE Reader will doubtless take Notice, that the Application of Temporal Motives is supposed to be attended with that from which indeed it ought never to be separated, to wit, the Use of the proper Means of Conviction. And after this Hint, there is nothing I conceive in this Account but what any Man of a tolerable Capacity may easily understand. It will be vain here to alledge, that though this Method be proper with respect to Children, it may not be so with respect to Men. For so far as Men are governed by Passion and not by Reason, so far they degenerate into Children; and so far therefore it must be proper to deal with them as such. The Propriety of this Method results not from any Thing by which a perverse Child is distinguishable from an unreasonable Man; but from something which in a greater or in a lesser Degree is common to them both. That in which a perverse Child differs from an unreasonable Man, is this; that he hath a less Measure of Understanding: But in this they both agree, that the one is led by his Passions to contradict that Measure of Understanding which he has as well as the other. Now the same Disease under a like Constitution naturally calls for the same Remedy: And since in both Cases it is by the Motives of this World that our Passions rise into Mutiny and become a Party against the Truth; the same Sort of Motives contrarily applied must also in both Cases be the proper Means of reducing them into Order. What Reason suggests to us upon this Head, Experience also verifies. For has any one so little Knowledge, or so little Charity as to say, that there have not been many Instances of Men, as well as of Children, who, by wholesome Severities or seasonable Encouragements, have been reclaimed from evil Courses? Has no one either seen or heard of a Malefactor, who, whilst under Sentence of Condemnation, has been brought to a better Mind? Though such Cases are not so frequent as one would wish; yet I trust in God, and we have, I think, great Reason to believe that the World has not wholly been without them. And whence? Why the *Ordinary* of the Place, perhaps you'll say, has discharged his Duty; or some charitable and well disposed Persons have been diligent in applying good Advice and sober Instruction. It may be so; and who doubts but these are proper and necessary Helps to the bringing of Sinners to Repentance. But let me ask one Question or two more? Do you believe that good Advice alone would have done the Business? Do you not think that the Instruction administred received some Weight from the Condition of the Offender; or rather that it was intirely owing to this, that he was found in a fit Temper and Disposition to be wrought upon by Persuasion? These are the Points I would propose upon the Case before us; and the Decision of them I willingly leave to any Man of common Observation.

IF any Thing else be wanting to make the Argument yet plainer; I desire it may not be forgotten, that God himself is pleased to make Use of this Method for the same Purpose. That he might the more effectually lead us to the Observance of his Laws, he hath so order'd it that the Breach of them (according to the Natural Order and Constitution of Things) is generally attended with the Inconveniencies of this World; and in the extraordinary Exercise of his Providence, he hath declared this to be the End of his *afflicting and grieving the Children of Men*, (not to cloath them with a mere outside Shew, which

he hates and abhors, but) *that they may be Partakers of his Holiness.* May not then some one expostulate with the Almighty in the Modern Way of Reasoning and say; "Is Holiness the Effect of Force? Of bodily Pleasure or of bodily Pain? Is it Religion to abstain from Drunkenness for Fear of Surfeiting, or from Whoredom to avoid the Rottenness of the Bones? Why then, since thou desirest a free and willing Service, hast thou not left us free? Thou hast given us a reasonable Soul; Thou has prescribed us reasonable Laws; thou hast proposed to us the Motives of a Life to come, as an Encouragement to us to do as we are commanded; and Obedience performed under the Influence of these Reasons, and with a View to these Motives, is the only Obedience which thou has promised to accept. Why then dost thou go about to destroy, as it were, the Work of thine own Hands, in proposing to effect that by Worldly Motives, which Worldly Motives can never produce?" If our Adversaries can tell how to silence this impious and vain Babler, I will undertake, by those very Arguments they shall make Use of, to answer Them. For the Case is thus far parallel to the other; that here is the Use or Application of the Motives of this World to this Intent, and for this Purpose, even the begetting true Religion, which is the Absurdity they complain of. I know it has been observed that (g) *when God himself has threatened Temporal Judgments; the being moved by these as they come from God, is an Act of Faith in him, and no such Worldly Inducement as God disapproves of.* But this Observation does not reach the whole of the Objection, nor is it indeed any thing to the Purpose. I say, 1st, It doth not reach the whole of the Objection. For my Argument is drawn not only from those Evils which are properly the Judgments of God upon Sinners; but from those Inconveniencies which in the Order of Nature do generally attend upon wicked Practices. 'Tis no Act of Faith for a Man to believe, that if he plays the Glutton or the Drunkard over Night he shall be sick the next Morning. Yet this is commonly the Case; God hath so adjusted the Frame of our Natures, that we can seldom offend him without bringing down some present Mischief upon our selves: In which Dispensation there is certainly less Wisdom, not to say Goodness, than there would have been, had it otherwise been ordered; if it be true that Worldly Inconveniencies not only cannot promote, but do even destroy true Religion. Again; This Argument relates not merely to those Judgments of God which are visibly so, and are considered by us as such; but even to those secret Acts of his Providence, which we cannot distinguish from those Effects which result from the Natural Order and Constitution of Things. When God by a special Warning tells us before-hand (as he told the *Ninevites*) that we shall be destroyed unless we repent; our Repenting in virtue of this Warning is indeed properly an Act of Faith, or rather it is the Effect of our Faith. But in the ordinary Course of his Providence, God chastises us without giving us any certain Tokens by which we may know that it is his Hand; and although even in this Case there is Room enough for the Exercise of Faith (God's general Threatnings supplying in some sort the Want of a special Warning) yet I do not think it to be absolutely necessary to the End propounded, *i. e.* to the Amendment of the Sinner. If it were, God would have taken Care to have given us a sure Foundation for it: for he doth not propose an End by insufficient Means. If a licentious Liver be punished with the Loss of his Estate; it may be a Means of bringing him to Sobriety, whether he considers it as a Judgment from God, or as a common Accident: And in truth that God is the Author of the Evil we suffer, is, I believe, generally speaking, one of the last Thoughts that is apt to arise in a Sinners Breast. That which puts the first Stop to his Carriere is the Weight of his Misfortunes; by which when his Heart begins to be mollified and subdued, 'tis then that he is in a fit Temper to look up to the Cause from whence they come. This

(g) *Ibid.* p. 233.

may serve to shew, that the being moved by those Worldly Inconveniencies which come from God, is not always an Act of Faith, and consequently that the Objection comes thus far short of the Argument. But I must observe, 2dly, That it is in truth nothing to the Purpose. For the Question is not whether the being moved by the Judgments of God be an Act of Faith, or not an Act of Faith; but how they operate. The End which God proposes in afflicting us, is to bring us to Repentance. Well; How do Afflictions answer this End? Why plainly no otherwise than as they are a Bridle to our Passions. And thus *David* speaks from his own Experience. *Before I was troubled, says he, I went wrong; but now have I kept thy Word.* And why? It follows soon after, *I thought on my Ways, and I turned my Feet unto thy Testimonies.* This, I say, is the Effect of the Inconveniencies of this World, they dispose us to sober Thoughts and serious Consideration, which the Hurry of our Passions, whilst they reign without Controul, will by no Means allow. Either shew then that they can have no such Effect when applied by the Hand of the Magistrate; or no longer pretend, that, when he does apply them, he makes Use of a Means improper for the End of true Religion.

THERE are these Differences indeed to be observed between these two Cases, viz. 1st, That when an Offender falls under the Penalties of Human Laws, he knows the worst of it, which perhaps he may set at a lower Rate than the Gratification of his Lusts. The Punishment may be either small in it self, or being, as to its Duration, confined to some determinate Period, may administer Hopes which will serve to keep the Passions alive, and so prevent those good Effects which would otherwise ensue. But to the Chastisements of God we can ascertain neither Measure nor End; for *who knoweth the Power of his Wrath?* Who can tell how miserable he may think fit to make wicked Men, even though we look no farther than the present State of Things? Again; 2dly, The Magistrate can judge only of the outward Appearance, but *God searcheth the Heart and Reins*; the one therefore must be satisfied with the mere Forbearance of the outward Act, whilst the other requires inward Purity and Sincerity. But these Differences will not go so far as to shew that the Application of Worldly Motives is proper in the Hand of God, and not so in the Hand of Man; but only that such Motives when considered by the Sinner as made Use of by God, will work an inward Reformation more certainly, than when they are applied by the Civil Magistrate. He who looks upon himself as under the Chastisement of God, and wishes for Deliverance, must bring himself to a sincere Repentance, because nothing less will be sufficient: Whereas he who would avoid Civil Penalties, may be a Sinner in his Heart, if so be he takes Care to avoid those Actions which the Law punishes. But it is to be considered that the mere Forbearance of the outward Act, though in it self it is not true Virtue, is yet a very good Step towards it; and that even the Judgments of God can operate no other Way, than by suppressing the outward Act, upon those who discern not the Hand of his Providence, which (as I just now observed) is the Case of most Sinners, especially till they have made some Advances in the Work of Reformation. The licentious Liver, who is punished with the Loss of his Estate, whilst he considers it only as a common Accident, is wrought upon no otherwise than as hereby that Fewel is withdrawn, which ministered to the inflaming his Lusts and Appetites. Now if this contributes any thing towards the begetting inward Purity; I can thus far see no Difference, whether it be done by the Hand of God or by the Hand of Man. How light some Men make of the mere Forbearance of the outward Act I am not insensible. But when I consider how certain and necessary a Tendency the Indulgence of one's self in wicked Practices has to corrupt the Mind, and bring on an habitual Disposition to Evil; I cannot but think that it would be the greatest Security in the World to Sobriety and good Manners, if there could be a Law, that just so much as a Man consumes in Luxury and Intem-

perance, just so much he should be obliged to pay yearly into the Publick Treasury.

I HAVE instanced chiefly in the Case of Punishment, because (as a very judicious (b) Writer has well observed) *the annexing positive Rewards to good Actions is a Case which rarely happens, and the very Attempt to do it would for the most part be ridiculous. The Magistrate encourages Sobriety, by punishing Drunkenness; Religion and Piety, by punishing Irreligion and Profaneness; Obedience to his Laws, by punishing Disobedience.* But yet, to consider the Efficacy of Rewards will not be altogether improper, because tho' it is not usual for the Magistrate to ascertain Rewards to good Actions by any positive Law; yet he very frequently does that which amounts to as much, *i. e.* he bestows Posts of Honour and Profit to some particular Subjects so or so qualified, with regard to Religion: This, I say, tho' it doth not strictly come under the Notion of a Reward given for the Sake, and on the Account of such Qualifications (it being only the assigning such Posts to those Persons who are supposed to be best qualified to fill them, and who upon other Accounts have deserved well of their Country;) yet it will ordinarily have the same Effect, and therefore may be considered as such. There is then this Difference between Temporal Rewards when propounded by God, and when propounded by Man, *viz.* That in the former Case they have a direct Tendency to beget the Love of God, *i. e.* True Religion, which in the latter it must be confessed they have not. For when God promises Temporal good Things to encourage us to Obedience; we are hereby led to consider him as our Benefactor, and are taught to love him because he hath made it for our Interest to serve him. But when Temporal good Things are propounded by Men, as a Reward to Religion; we then consider Men as our Friends, and we many times think it enough to please them, whom, by the mere Shadow of Religion, we can easily deceive, even though we do not please God, who is not to be imposed upon by outward Appearances. But still they have the same remote, indirect Tendency to promote true Religion, that Punishments have. For Men are no more willing to be debar'd of present Good than they are to endure present Evil; and therefore the one must be a proper Means to restrain those Passions, which would, if left to themselves, lead us from our Duty, and to awaken our Consideration, as well as the other.

FROM the Practical Duties of Religion which I have hitherto principally had in my View, let us now proceed to the Speculative; to which, it is easy to see, that the general Principles upon which I build may readily be applied. For nothing is more plain from common Observation, than that the same Depravity of Mind, which leads Men into wicked Practices, does also very frequently lead them into erroneous Opinions. This is more especially true with regard to the Doctrines of Revealed Religion: the Evidence whereof (as I have observed at large upon (i) another Occasion) not coming with the same Degree of Force, wherewith natural Truths usually present themselves to the Mind (because we see it through a great Variety of Mediums) may easily be lost where Passion and Prejudice intervene to obstruct its Influence. To become a Christian, there is no Need that a Man should be foolishly credulous, because there is enough in the Evidence upon which the Gospel stands, to satisfy the Mind of any fair and reasonable Inquirer. But then there is great Need of a meek and a tractable Disposition; since this Evidence will not force the Assent of those who are not willing to learn. This then, I say, opens to us the Way clearly to discern, how the applying the Motives of this World on

(b) Dean Sherlock's Considerations. p. 28.

(i) Operations of the Spirit. Chap. 3. §. 6, 7, 8.

the Side of the true Faith, will support and increase the true Faith; to wit, as it is a Means to take off the Weight of those Prejudices, which bias the Judgments and Understandings of Men, and to create both a Willingness to learn and a Readiness to yield, when the proper Means of Conviction are laid before them. That which prejudices Men against the Faith, is commonly some Worldly Interest or other which presents it self in Opposition to it: The proper Remedy therefore to this Evil (till there is Room for a better) will be to place Truth and Interest in the same View, which if it doth not end in Conviction (as for want of Abilities to judge sometimes it may not) will yet have this certain good Effect, that Men will neither foolishly reject, nor wantonly depart from it. They will not so easily indulge Caprice and Humour, nor lend a willing Ear to those who preach new and strange Doctrines: They will be rather apt to catch at very small Advantages, than to neglect great and weighty Opportunities. I speak this upon Supposition that the Methods made use of by the Publick for the Support and Encouragement of the true Faith, be of Weight sufficient to overballance all separate Views: For if it be so (which sometimes happens) that a greater Interest is to be served by adhering to a Party, the publick Methods must so far loose their Effect: For then in Truth the Motives of this World will not lye for the true Religion but against it. But admitting this Exception, the Case will be as I have stated it; and who does not see that this is a very great Point gained in Favour of the true Religion, who considers that Prejudice is the great Source of Error; and that there are very few who reject or depart from the Truth through the Fault of their Understandings, comparatively to the Number of those who are led aside by the Prevalency of their Fleshly Appetites.

I AM well aware that this Way of Reasoning supposes Men to be under such a general Sense of Religion, as to think it to be their Duty to inquire seriously which, among the various Ways of Worship practiced in the World, is that of which God best approves; and consequently that it cannot affect those who are so absolutely Careless, as to be ready to profess any that their Temporal Interest invites them to, without considering whether it be right or wrong. But then it is to be taken Notice, that the Case of this Sort of Men (whilst they continue to be such) will be the very same under every Method. The Proposal of Worldly Motives does not make them Careless, but finds them so: And as they do now profess the true Religion because Wordly Interest is on it's Side; so if all Religions were alike in this Respect, they would profess none. The annexing therefore the Motives of this World to the true Religion, if it does them no Good, it does them at least no Harm: For if a Man be absolutely unconcerned about God and Religion; his being a mere outside Professor cannot make him a worse Man, than he would be if he had made no Profession of Religion at all. But his being a Professor of the true Religion may be the Means of making him a better: for by being thus brought within the Verge of Instruction, he may through God's Blessing be brought to a Sense of his Duty, and come to worship him (not as he doth now, for Fashion and Interest sake, but) with the Sincerity of an honest Mind. Cases of this sort have not unfrequently happened. Men who have come to Church, for Instance, at first, perhaps, only to oblige their Friends, or to avoid the Scandal of Irreligion or Singularity; being won over by the Preaching of the Word, have, in time, been heartily reconciled both to Religion and to our Communion. Now in such a Case, it will not, I suppose, be pretended that a Man's Religion is ever the worse; any more than it will be said that a Child reads his Book the worse, because he was at first awed to it by the Rod, or bribed by a Toy.

THE Reader now sees by what Way the Motives of this World when applied on the side of true Religion, will advance the Interest of true Religion,

both as to the Opinions and Practices of those who are directly and immediately under the Influence of such Motives. And the Way in a few Words is this, That they minister to the Weaknesses and Infirmities of Men, and serve as a Counterpoise to those Carnal or Worldly Motives on the other side, which would lead them from Truth or a good Conscience. Those who imagine (if any such there are) that even this Influence of Worldly Motives destroys all Religion, are Casuists who understand neither themselves nor the Reason of Things. I am very free to allow that what is done merely upon a Worldly View, (*i. e.* without any inward Sense of Duty) has nothing at all of Religion in it: But if by the Application of Worldly Motives, Men are brought to so much Consideration as to see the Reasonableness of what they do, they shall be thought, I hope, to do a reasonable Service. For in this Case the Motives of this World are not the immediate Principle of Action, but the remote Occasion of it: They are to be considered not as the proper Cause, but as the Means under which the proper Cause operates; which, it is plain, cannot so far influence the Effect as to alter the Nature of it. A Man indeed would be so much the more perfect, if he were so far out of the reach of Temptation as to want no Support from the Motives of this World; but we must have a care how we make the being intirely out of the Reach of Temptation essential to true Religion. I know many an honest Man that goes to Church constantly; says his Prayers with great Devotion; lives unblamably; and is firmly persuaded that he serves God in the Way that he has appointed: And yet I will not venture to say of such a one, that the Prospect of a good Estate, for Instance, would not be able to warp his Judgment, or cause him to act even against his Persuasion. What then? Shall we condemn him for this Reason? Is his Religion to be set aside as good for nothing, because under these Circumstances he would assuredly transgress? If you say it is; then, by the way, pray take this along with you, that the Proposal of Temporal Motives can do no such Hurt to Religion as has been pretended. The Hurt it does is said to be this, *viz.* That it is a Temptation to Men to act against their Consciences, which, how far it is an Objection, shall be considered in another Place. But upon the present Supposition it can be no Objection. For if he who would sin if a Temptation were offered, is void of Religion, as well as he who actually does sin when a Temptation is offered; it is manifest that the State of Religion can, in this Respect, receive no manner of Alteration, whether Worldly Motives be proposed or not. But God forbid that we should make him so hard and severe a Master. That we must be willing to part with all when he calls us to it, I want not to be told: nor therefore do I doubt but when a Man actually sacrifices his Conscience to his Interest, he is in a damnable State. But if Men do well in the Station they are in, I do not think that they shall be rejected because under another Station they would have done ill; and that for this Reason among many others, *viz.* Because it is one Instance of the Mercy and Goodness of that God, who *suffers us not to be tempted above what we are able*, that he accommodates the Conditions of Men to their respective Tempers and Capacities, and many Times secures his faithful Servants from the Assaults of those Temptations under which he foresees they would be apt to miscarry. It must be allowed then that Religion, and a Disposition to be overcome by such or such Temptations are consistent Things; and that the Magistrate does but imitate the Example of God himself, when by a lawful and prudent Use of the Motives of this World, he removes those Stumbling Blocks out of the Way, which to weak and unstable Men may be the Occasion of falling.

I THOUGHT it needful to say thus much, that I might the more effectually reconcile that Influence which I ascribe to Wordly Motives with the Notion of Religion. I might add, that as every Degree of Proficiency is a Step to greater Improvements; 'tis to be hoped, and may reasonably be expected, that
this

this Imperfect State may by Degrees advance and grow up into a more perfect one, by the constant and regular Use of those Means, of which Multitudes perhaps would have been deprived, had they, without any Support or Encouragement from without, been every one of them left to bear the Weight of his own Infirmities. If a Nurse makes use of leading Strings, 'tis not because she proposes that the Child should never go alone, but in order to bring him to it. 'Tis the same thing as to Temporal Motives with regard to Religion. They are seasonable and proper Helps in our Infant Estate, in which it is not supposed that we should always continue. No; Our business is to *go on from Strength to Strength*; from lesser Degrees of Proficiency to greater: and 'tis our own Faults if under those Means which the true Religion always affords, we do not arrive to such a State of Maturity, that what was at first done under the shelter of the Motives of this World, may be done at last without, or even against the Motives of this World.

I HAVE now set the Argument in as clear a Light as I am able: And if it concludes what it is brought to prove, our Adversaries have lost one of their main Supports. But if it doth not; surely it is not so very weak and impertinent, but that it might have challenged the Consideration of those who have of late written so largely upon this Subject. Nevertheless I do not find that it has been so much as once hinted at. Mr. *Locke* and Mr. *Bayle* have indeed both taken Notice of it. But with the one (as he has managed the Matter) I have nothing to do; and the other has treated the Objection with more Contempt than became him, unless he had known better how to remove it. What Advantages Mr. *Locke's* Adversary may have given him in his particular way of reasoning upon the Case I know not, having never seen his Books. But this I cannot help observing even from Mr. *Locke's* own Letters, that great Men do not always argue like themselves. The main of what he hath said is, (k) 1. That you cannot infer the Lawfulness of Temporal Motives merely from their Usefulness; which is true. And if his Adversary inferred any such Thing, he argued weakly. But the Point with me is, whether in order to the begetting true Religion, Temporal Motives are (when applied on the Side of true Religion) useful or not useful; and Mr. *Locke* is so far from denying, that he confesses that they are. Hear him if you please in his own Words. *You say that Force indirectly and at a Distance may do some Service. I GRANT it: Make your best of it. What do you conclude.* —I care not what he concludes, nor what any one else concludes. Thus much is plain, that, if that be true of Worldly Motives in general, which Mr. *Locke* grants concerning Force (and certainly it is a great deal truer;) to say that Worldly Motives cannot be useful to the ends of Religion, is a Refinement upon the Question, which HE never once thought of. 2. He quarrels much with his Adversary for pretending that Dissenters from the National Religion, are punished only *to make them consider*, and says that in Fact the Case is otherwise. That Dissenters are punished *because they are Dissenters*; and that it would be absurd to punish any Man only to make him consider, because all have not Opportunity to consider; All have not Abilities; Some may have consider'd already; No-body can ascertain what Degree of Consideration is necessary, nor know when Men have considered, or when they have not considered; and for divers others such like Reasons. But all this is nothing at all to me. For none of these Exceptions have any Tendency to shew, (what indeed can never be shewn) that if Dissenters are laid under outward Inconveniencies, this will not be a Means to make them consider what they do before they separate; which is the only Point that, at present, I am concerned with.

(k) See 2d. Letter for Toleration, p. 7. & seq. and 3d. Letter, Chap. 6.

MR. BAYLE falls more directly into the Point, and says, (l) *That the filling Men with the Fears of Temporal Punishments, and with the Hopes of Temporal Advantages, is putting them in a very ill State for discerning the true Reasons of Things, from the false.* But who sees not that this Answer, instead of removing, confirms the Objection? What Mr. Bayle would have, and what he has taken a great deal of needless Pains to prove, is this; That in considering the Nature of Things, the Mind will be apt to determine it self to that side which is attended with Temporal Advantages. Very good; And is it not then a very just Inference from hence, that if Temporal Advantage attends upon true Religion, Men will most naturally be led to embrace the true Religion? Whether 'tis right to apply the Motives of this World to support true Religion, is a Question which shall be considered in due Time: But if it be wrong, this has no Tendency to shew that true Religion cannot be supported by the Motives of this World; or that the Motives of this World, may not be the remote Instrument of begetting an inward Principle. This is the Point which Mr. Bayle ought to have proved: But instead of this, he, in effect gives it up; by not only allowing, but contending for that very Supposition, upon which my Reasoning to prove the contrary intirely depends. As little to the Purpose is what he says to that Instance by which I have endeavour'd to illustrate this Matter; to wit, a Father's applying Temporal Motives in the Management of his Child. *Pergis pugnancia secum, Frontibus adversis componere*, says he to St. Austin, who had made Use of the same Illustration. His meaning is that what is proper in the Management of Children, is not so in the Management of Men. But why so? Why thus it follows. (m) *Children being unable to form any deliberate or reasonable Judgment upon their own Actions, but obeying the Impressions of the Machine, and those Sensations of Pleasure or Pain which Objects produce in them: What we are principally to require at their Hands, is the Practice of certain Actions. But as they are very little sensible of any Motive of Honour, and cannot see far enough into the depth of a Reason to give it the Preference to their Passions, they must be threatned, and sometimes whipt, before they can be brought to perform these Actions.* Instead of which, Mr. Bayle might have said (for it amounts to no more) that if a Boy will not do as he is bidden, he must be chastised. Well; so far I think we are agreed. But what End do you propose by chastising him? Is it merely to regulate the outward Act, or to reform the inward Disposition also? Why you shall hear. *It answers (says he) our End sufficiently if they only perform these outward Actions, though we should not just then enlighten their Understandings, nor endue them with any just Notions of Things.* This is pleasant: Not just then enlighten! Why how should you just then enlighten, when just then they are supposed not capable of being enlightened? But is your End sufficiently answered if they should never be enlightened afterward? This cautious way of speaking would give us hopes that the Question must be answered in the Negative; and then I have the Thing I want. But the Instance which follows leads us to the Affirmative side; for thus he proceeds to illustrate the Matter. *A Father has a mind his Son should learn to write; orders him to write so many Hours a Day; and whips him if he does not write.* From which he observes, that *the Father gains his Point if the Child only practices Writing, and for fear of Whipping, endeavours to write a fair Hand.* Impertinent! He that teaches his Child to Write, to Fiddle, or to Dance, (for all these Instances are alike proper) teaches an Art which consists in outward Actions: His End therefore is sufficiently answered, if by the Fear of the Rod he is brought to perform these outward Actions. But suppose a Man has a mind to teach his Child the Catechism; suppose he tells him that he must not Lye, nor Swear, nor Cheat, nor Blaspheme, &c.

(l) Remarks upon St. Austin, Numb. 6. But the Reader may see it more at large, Philos. Comm. Par. 2. Chap. 1.

(m) Remarks *ut supra*, Numb. 27.

and whips him when he offends. What, in the Name of common Sense does he mean by this? Does he treat him as a mere Machine, or as a reasonable Creature? Does he propose no more than he proposes by whipping his Horse or his Dog; *i. e.* only that he may exhibit orderly, certain outward Motions; or does he hope hereby to make him a good Man? The Truth is evidently this: That what the Father directly and immediately proposes is no more than the regulating the outward Behaviour. It is that his Child should be able to repeat his Catechism; that he should forbear the Acts of Lying, Swearing, Cheating, Blaspheming, &c. But then (if he understands himself) he proposes also, that the outward Behaviour being thus constantly kept in Order, Reason may have Liberty gradually to operate, and produce those inward good Effects of Knowledge and Virtue, which otherwise (*i. e.* if the Passions had been suffer'd to work as they list'd) you might have expected in vain. It was not for nothing then, you see, that Mr. Bayle, overlooking this obvious and pertinent Instance, stept aside to fetch in another quite foreign to the Matter in Hand. For the Case being thus determined, the Question still returns (which it seems he had no mind to answer) *viz.* Why if outward Restraint may produce an inward Principle in Children; it may not also effect the same in Men; when the Reason which makes the Means proper in one Case, is common to the other? But when Mr. Bayle had told us, that no more is proposed by beating of a Child, than regulating the outward Action, it was no Wonder that he should say the same of a Master's beating his Servant; nor that he should make Use of as improper an Instance to illustrate this latter Case, as he had produced to illustrate the former. *Let a Cook says he, persuade himself as much as he pleases, that his Master is not fit to live, and that he deserves to have his Dinner spoiled; yet if the Dread of a Horse-whip hinders his dressing it ill, is not this all his Master aims at?* Yes Sir, if he minds nothing else but his Belly. But if he be not an Epicurean throughout, he will as soon chastise his Cook for blaspheming his God, as for spoiling his Sawce; and he may mend his Manners too, by so doing, for any thing that Mr. Bayle has to say to the contrary. As to what Mr. Bayle hath said concerning the Efficacy of Worldly Motives in the Hand of God, it is only this, *viz.* That (n) *God who is the first Mover as well as Searcher of Hearts, may make his Chastisements avail to the inward Conversion of the Party; but he has nowhere promised a Blessing to our Persecutions of Hereticks, nor the Influences of his Grace upon them.* Now, as there is Reason enough to believe that he himself thought this to be a mere Evasion; so it is (so far as I am at present concerned) so manifestly nothing to the Purpose, that I shall not stay to answer it. Nor indeed had I spent so much Time in answering his Objections against the main Argument; if I had not found my self, as it were, bully'd into it by a (o) *Promise before hand that it should so fully be confuted; that for the future it should be made over to the Under-spur-leathers, those Missionaries of the Village who never blush to produce the same Objections over and over, without taking the least Notice of the Answers which have ruined them to all Intents and Purposes.* This is a good home Challenge; and I thought it behoved me not to overlook what Mr. Bayle seemed at least to lay such a mighty Stress upon. But the Reader I hope, is by this time satisfied that great Words are not always a Sign of good Arguments.

Parturiunt Montes nascitur ridiculus Mus.

AND now I have done with the Argument so far as it relates to those who are directly and immediately under the Influence of Worldly Motives. Give me leave now a little more fully to enlarge upon the Effects which the Application of them will have more remotely upon others. Now these Effects are not confined to a few, but reach to the whole Commonwealth in general;

(n) *Ibid.* Numb. 8.

(o) *Philos. Com. Par. 1, Chap 2.*

the Customs and Manners in which are as naturally and regularly determined by such Motives, as any Effect is determined by its Cause. And this is that which makes this Consideration, how much soever neglected by our modern Writers, to be of the greatest Consequence. For the Number of those who can propose to themselves Places of Honour and Profit, no where bears any Proportion to the whole Community. Admit then that such Motives can have no good Effect upon the former; it will still be true that the Ends of Religion will be served by them, if by their Means a good Provision will be made for the latter. Now to shew you how naturally this Effect will follow; Let it be supposed only, that the Religion which is taught and professed in the Church of *England* is the true Religion; Let us imagine it to be now first established by Law, and so hedged about with Temporal Privileges, that if a Separation from it were not attended with positive Penalties, there should at least be no prospect of rising to any thing considerable in the Way of Civil Promotion but under the Profession of it: What now will be the natural Consequence of this? Why in the first Place, the great and leading Men of the Nation will all of them be professed Members of the Church of *England*; the Doctrines of the Church of *England* will be taught in our Churches, Universities, and Publick Schools; and it's Way of Worship will for the most part prevail. Now to pleasure our Adversaries, I am willing that upon this first Change, they should suppose as many outside Professors as they can have the Conscience to suppose. Be it so, that many do profess it with a View to Worldly Interest; more to comply with Custom and Fashion; and some few out of Principle. Yet I will not suppose Truth to be so barren a Thing, that it will not grow and daily increase by being duly planted and watered. I should rather say in our Saviour's Language, that it is *like a Grain of Mustard-Seed, which when it is sown, is indeed the least of all Seeds; but when it groweth up, it becometh a great Tree, so that the Fowls of the Air lodge in the Branches thereof.* Now if you consider it, here is an effectual Provision made both for *Planting* and *Watering*. For as to *Planting*, not to mention the Effect which the constant and regular Preaching of God's Word will probably have even upon these Professors themselves; Not to mention this, I say, 'tis plain that those same Reasons which prevail upon them to conform to the established Religion, will cause them to educate their Children in the same Way; and our Schools and Universities will be as plentifully stored with the Children and Youth of the Country, as our Posts of Honour are filled with those of a more advanced Age. It matters not how this happens: For does any one think that because the Father in conforming proposes only to make himself great, therefore the Child is placed out of the reach of every Thing that is good? What if somebody to gratify his Avarice or Ambition accepts of a Post which he cannot possibly execute consistently with his Principles, *i. e.* against his Conscience? I hope for all this his Son may learn his Church-Catechism with as much Sincerity as you can wish. And certainly whatever in such a Case be the Motive which influences the Parent, this cannot hinder the good Effect of Instruction upon his Children: Nor will that Religion which in Virtue of this Instruction they shall hereafter follow with a good Conscience, be at all the worse because the Parent both in following it himself, and in having them taught to follow it, acted with a bad one. I do not say that this Effect will always follow: For some perhaps may have so little Religion themselves, as to take Pains that their Children may have as little: And it is possible for a Man after his Child hath been well disciplined in the Doctrines of the Church of *England*, by some new Art or other, to undo every Thing that has been done before. But these are Cases which rarely happen, and which never can happen but when Men find so much Pleasure in an Evil Conscience, as to be willing to leave it as a Legacy to their Children; or have their Eye upon some growing Party which they think will be considerable enough to alter the Establishment, and model the Constitution after their own Minds. But generally speaking, I say, the Consequence will be as I have

have represented it. For what general Reason can be assigned, why a Man should not bring up his Child in that Way which he chuses to follow himself? Is it not Natural to us all to desire the same Advantages for our Children which we desire for our selves? Thus then will the Seed be sown, which being gradually watered by the preaching of God's Word in the Places of his Publick Worship, will grow up into a plentiful Harvest both to the present and to future Generations.

THIS Effect will be so much the more certain and universal in Proportion, as the Number of those who profess the National Religion upon a Principle of Conviction, is greater: Which though for Argument sake it was supposed to be the least; will yet in Fact, where Truth is encouraged, be always the most considerable, because Truth must always be visible to those who have Understanding to discern it, where there is no unreasonable Byass to obstruct its Influence. So that from hence, and from all that has been offer'd upon this Head, I beg leave to infer, that it is possible for the Magistrate by the Methods of Civil Administration to advance the Interest of true Religion: A Point which I should have been ashamed to have dwelt so long upon, had I not thought it necessary towards the Conviction of those, who have accustomed themselves so much to refining, as to grow unacquainted with the most plain and obvious Things. There had certainly been no need of this arguing *a priori*, if our Adversaries would only have given themselves the Trouble of opening their Eyes, and of observing what every Day passes in the World: I should rather have said, if they would have been so just as to have made a proper Use of what they do observe. For who so forward as they to complain of the Mischief that Worldly Motives do, when they are made Use of to support a false Religion? And what I beseech them is the Mischief they complain of? Are they afraid that Men are made Hypocrites, mere outside Professors? This is the Case of many without Question: But it were a barbarous sort of Civility to complement the good Sense of whole Nations, or indeed the major part of any Nation, at the Expence of their Honesty. The common People in *France*, *Spain*, and many other Countries profess Popery (as we have all the Reason in the World to believe) with as much Integrity, *i. e.* under as firm a Persuasion of its Truth, as the common People of *England* profess Protestantism. How I pray happens this? Is it not from hence, that the Motives of this World are made Use of to support and encourage Popery? Again; Popery heretofore prevailed in *England* as universally as Protestantism does now. Whence this Difference? Is it not hence, that whereas the Motives of this World were heretofore employed on the side of Popery, they are now turned against Popery? If not, why are we afraid of Popish Kings, Popish Laws, a Popish Government? Why I say do we fear and so cautiously guard against this great Evil; if we do not believe, that upon such a Change, Protestantism would in a while be rooted out, and Popery be restor'd to its ancient Possessions? Judge now if this be not an Evidence to the eye-sight of the World, that Temporal Motives may be the Instrument of begetting an inward Principle; and that, whatever the Religion be in favour whereof these Motives are adequately applied, that Religion will most assuredly prevail. And what is the Reason of this? Why, if it needs to be repeated, it is partly, because the Motives of this World do byass the Judgments and Understandings of Men; but principally, because the general Course of Instruction and Education in every Commonwealth does constantly and unavoidably follow them. There is no one so inconsiderate as not to observe, that the Principles which we hold in our Manhood, are generally speaking either the same with, or an Improvement upon, those which we have imbibed in our younger Years; that it is a hard Thing to lay aside those Notions which long Use and Custom has rendered familiar to us: and that (few Men being formed for Study and Speculation) Religion is in most, not so much the Result of their own Industry in

comparing and judging, as of the happy or unhappy Care of those who have had the first framing of their Minds, and laid the first Rudiments of Knowledge. These I say are common Observations. Now if the Effect of Worldly Motives be such when applied in favour of a false Religion; how much more forcibly will they operate when they are made Use of to encourage the true; when the Power of Custom and Prepossession shall conspire together with that of natural Light, as well to persuade, as to keep Men firm and stedfast in their Persuasions?

How far the Effect of Wordly Motives when applied to support a false Religion, is an Argument against applying them to encourage the true, is a Point which I shall fully consider in another Place. My present Business was only to shew that it is possible in the Nature of the Thing, for the Magistrate by the Methods of Civil Administration to serve the Interest of true Religion; or that the Application of Worldly Motives is not an improper Means of begetting true Religion. And though I think I have made good this Point beyond all reasonable Ground of Exception; yet I will beg leave just to mention one Consideration more, and that is the Example of God himself in his Dealings with the *Jews*, whose Law was enforced with Temporal Sanctions. For how irrational soever it may be thought to argue from what was done under the Mosaic Law, to what may and ought to be done under the Christian Dispensation; the Case will certainly go so far as to shew that Religion may be promoted by Temporal Methods, unless any one be so wicked as to believe that God makes use of improper Means, or so absurd as to imagine, that the End which God proposed was only to bring his People to the Practice of a mere external Worship, and not to secure that inward Reverence which was due to his Person and Authority. And indeed unless it be true that Religion is, in the Nature of it, capable of being promoted by Temporal Methods, I see not with what Sense it is that we pray (as our Liturgy teaches us) that the Civil Magistrate and those who are IN AUTHORITY UNDER HIM, MAY ADMINISTER JUSTICE TO THE MAINTENANCE OF TRUE RELIGION AND VIRTUE. But our Adversaries have attempted (and what is it that they will not attempt) to reconcile this Prayer to their Notions! They (*p*) are FULLY SATISFIED (it seems) *that to MINISTER JUSTICE TO THE PUNISHMENT OF WICKEDNESS AND VICE, AND TO THE MAINTENANCE OF TRUE RELIGION AND VIRTUE, CAN mean nothing but to execute their Office so, as to punish the OUTWARD ACTS of Wickedness and Vice, and to encourage the OUTWARD ACTS of Righteousness and Virtue. — Or if any think — that the MAINTENANCE OF TRUE RELIGION, signifies the Support, Establishment, and Defence of any particular Profession or Order of Worship — this goes no farther than EXTERNAL PROFESSION, and the EXTERNAL BEHAVIOUR, and SOUNDS used in Publick Worship.* But whence this mighty Satisfaction I wonder, that true Religion and Virtue CAN signify nothing more than outward Acts, outward Behaviour, outward Sounds? Is Religion a mere outward Act? Why no; but *it happens here to be called so.* It happens! As if our Reformers compiled the Liturgy with so much Hast that it was pure Chance whether they spoke Sense or not! But how, I ask, are they assured of this? Why, 1. True Religion is *here opposed to Wickedness in Practice, as Virtue is to Vice — and the outward Actions of Men, as they affect human Society, are the Object of his (the Magistrate's) Care and Concern.* This Reasoning is somewhat dark: But either I cannot understand it, or it concludes thus. That which the Magistrate punisheth, is the outward Act of Wickedness only; therefore that which we pray that he may maintain, is the outward Act of Religion only: Which Conclusion lying about as far distant from the Premises as East is from West, I must leave these Reasoners them-

(*p*) Answer to the Representation. p. 172, 173.

selves to find out the Connection. The Reason why the Magistrate punisheth only the outward Act of Wickedness is obvious enough, and shall be considered afterwards. But be it what it will, surely there is Sense enough in praying that the Magistrate may be diligent in punishing all Acts of Wickedness on the one Hand; and in maintaining (not merely the outward Profession of Religion, but) true Essential Religion on the other, if it be in his Power to maintain it. O! but this is what the Magistrate *cannot do*; and they argue, 2. That therefore we are not here taught to pray that he may do it. *The Magistrate — can reach with all his Power no farther than outward Practice; — He cannot reach to the Hearts or Thoughts of Men, so as to make them truly worship God, or truly Religious; so that this supposes external Behaviour to be here called true Religion.* But who told them, I would desire to know, that the Magistrate with all his Power can reach no farther than outward Practice; or that he cannot make (*i. e.* that he cannot be the Instrument of making) Men truly Religious? Why No-body; But they *think so*, It is *their* Opinion, *THEY have often remarked it.* But under Favour 'tis not their Opinion, nor our Opinion, nor any body's Opinion, but the Opinion of those who compiled the Liturgy, that is to be considered in the Case. If they can very plainly prove that they have any where taught this Doctrine; this indeed will be a good Rule whereby to interpret the Words of the Prayer: But if not, they themselves may remark it as their own Opinion as often as they please: The Matter will still rest where it is, and the Argument end in the same Place where it begun. What I say is, that if the Magistrate cannot maintain true Religion, there is no Sense in these Words of our Liturgy, which teach us to pray that he may do it. Their Answer is, That in these Words we cannot be taught to pray that the Magistrate may maintain true Religion, but only that he may maintain the outward Profession of true Religion. And why? Why because the Magistrate cannot maintain true Religion. Is not this special Reasoning! — But to settle this Point in a few Words. The Compilers of our Liturgy have no where delivered it as their Opinion, that the Magistrate cannot promote true Religion: They suppose the direct contrary in this very Prayer, which is so far from enforcing, that it will not admit of that Sense which our Adversaries are willing to put upon it. The word RELIGION is, I own, in common Speech, often used to signify no more than the outward Profession: But that Religion consider'd as an outward Profession (*i. e.* abstracted from internal Purity) should be a proper Subject of a Christian's Prayer, is a Notion as new as it is absurd. Or if our Adversaries do not think themselves singular, in praying for the mere Shadow and Form of Godliness; let them, if they are able, justify themselves from one plain Passage at least, either in our Publick Prayers, or in any approved Form of Private Devotion. Besides, if they could wrest the word RELIGION to this Sense, this would not help them. For we pray here that the Magistrate may maintain not only true Religion, but VIRTUE. And elsewhere, that he may PRESERVE THE PEOPLE COMMITTED TO HIS CHARGE IN WEALTH, PEACE, AND GODLINESS, and that RELIGION AND PIETY MAY BE ESTABLISHED AMONGST US; which Words VIRTUE, GODLINESS, and PIETY, do never, even in the Mouth of the Vulgar, signify the mere outward Behaviour. And thus much shall suffice to have been spoken concerning the first Question.

C H A P. II.

Of the Magistrate's Right to encourage true Religion, wherein is shewn, first, How this Right stands by, and under, the Law of Nature.

IT being shewn that it is (in the Nature of the Thing) possible for the Magistrate by the Exercise of Civil Authority, to promote the Interest of God's true Religion, and by what Methods; we come now to the main Point, which is to enquire what Right he has to do it. Which Question as it is in it self evidently distinct from the foregoing; so it bears no such Relation to it, as that the one must necessarily be determined by the other. If the Magistrate has a Right to encourage true Religion, this indeed supposes it possible for him to encourage it, as has afore been observed: But on the other Hand, when you have proved it possible for the Magistrate to encourage true Religion; something more is required to shew that it is Lawful for him to do it; for you cannot infer a Right from a mere Possibility.

Two Things then I conceive will readily be understood when we speak of the Magistrate's Right to encourage true Religion, *viz.* 1. That we speak of the Person or Persons in whose Hands the supreme Power in any Commonwealth is lodged; And, 2. That we speak of the Magistrate consider'd as such, *i.e.* consider'd as acting in his Publick Capacity. That the Magistrate in his Private Capacity may encourage true Religion, and that he ought to do so, no one disputes: For he is then consider'd not under the Notion of a Magistrate, but under the Notion of a Man; and consequently must have the same Right that all other Men have. But what a Man has a Right to do as a Private Person, he may have no Right to do as a Publick Minister: And therefore I have expressly added these Words *by the Methods of Civil Administration*, to denote that the Inquiry is concerning what the Magistrate has a Right to do *ex Officio*, or in virtue of his being the Head of the Body Politick. To determine this Point therefore it will be necessary in the first Place, to take a general View of the Magistrate's Office; and to consider whether the Care of Religion does at all belong to it or not. For if it does not; all Methods which, as Magistrate, he can make Use of for the Encouragement of Religion, will be an Abuse of his Trust, and consequently alike Unlawful. But if it does; those Methods which have been assigned above as proper in themselves, may be Lawful also, and must be so unless some special Reason intervenes. I shall therefore make it my Business to shew, That the Care of Religion does belong to the Magistrate's Office: But in doing this, the Nature of the Subject will not admit that I confine my self so strictly to the general Point, as not sometimes to mention some of those Particulars, in which the Care of Religion does consist. I shall however be as sparing as I can, reserving the more distinct Discussion of those Particulars till afterwards.

THAT we may proceed clearly then, it will be very proper to trace the Matter up to the Beginning, and shew how the Case stands, under, and according to, the Law of Nature. For certain it is, that what Right the Magistrate always had by the Law of Nature, that Right and no other he has still under the Gospel; unless the Gospel hath made any Difference; which whether it hath, or hath not, shall be consider'd in it's proper Place. Let us consider then, what true Religion under the Law of Nature is: And this can be neither more nor less than Moral Virtue, *i.e.* a Behaviour towards God and Man, suitable to the Dictates of right Reason, resulting from the Belief of a Providence, *i.e.* of a God who made and governs the World; who is the Rewarder of them that do well, and the Punisher of them that do Evil. I mention Re-

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wards and Punishments, not as if the being influenced by the Expectation of them were Essential to the Notion of Natural Religion (for this is a Question with which there is at present no Occasion for me to concern my self,) but I speak of them as the great Motives, without which Religion cannot in Fact be supported, and which the Notion of a Deity naturally leads us to expect. It is impossible for us to think of a just and a wise Governour of the World, without supposing that he will some Way or other vindicate the Honour of his Laws, and make a proper Distinction between those who reverence, and those who set at nought his Authority: And accordingly we may observe that even those Heathens who had little or no Notion of a future State, did yet consider the Gods whom they adored under the Notion of Rewarders and Avengers; which gave Rise to those numberless Superstitions, which constituted the external Worship of the Gentile World. But whatever Vanities Superstition and a false Notion of the Deity might introduce; true Religion under the Law of Nature will be nothing else than Moral Virtue, and of this I would always be understood when I speak of the Magistrate's Right to encourage true Religion under the Law of Nature.

To know therefore whether the Care of Religion belongs to the Magistrate by the Law of Nature, we must consider the End of the Magistrate's Office; which all Men acknowledge to be the Security of the Civil Interests, *i. e.* the Lives, Liberties, and Possessions of the Subject; all which may be comprehended in one Word, the PUBLICK CIVIL GOOD. Whether this be the ONLY End of the Magistrate's Office, shall be consider'd by and by; That this is ONE End of it, is confessed on all Hands, and in Consequence of this Principle it has been allowed that *(q)* *whatever directly affects the Happiness of Publick Societies, is within the Magistrate's Care.* I make no reckoning here of the Word *directly*, because our Adversaries by sometimes using, and sometimes omitting it, have shewn that they make no Account of it themselves; and because in Reason it is plain, that if it be the Business of the Magistrate to take Care of the Publick Civil Good, he must have to do with every Thing in which the Publick Civil Good is concerned, whether it affects it directly or indirectly. The Question therefore is, whether the Publick Civil Good be concerned in the Religion of the Subject: And this it evidently is, upon these two Accounts, *viz.* 1. As the Publick Civil Good is concerned in the Behaviour of the Subject, upon which Religion, or the Want of it, must always have a very sensible Influence; And, 2. As the Publick Civil Good is concerned in the Pleasure or Displeasure of Almighty God, who blesteth those that pay a due Reverence to his Name, and frequently punisheth whole Nations *for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein.* As to the first of these two Points, it is so clear and evident by its own Light, that it hath been observed even by our Opposers, from whom it hath extorted this Confession, that *(r)* *True Piety is of high Benefit to Society, as it engages all Men to do those outward Actions which are beneficial to Society.* Now those who can allow thus much, should methinks be led to this easy and natural Inference; that therefore it is the Magistrate's Business, as Guardian of the Publick Civil Good, to promote and encourage true Piety. But instead of this it is immediately added, that the Civil Magistrate *has it not in his Office to encourage true Piety*; and 'tis perpetually inculcated upon us that his Concern reaches no farther than to the *outward Actions* or Behaviour of Men.

Now though this Notion appears at first Sight to be as absurd as it is new; yet because it is so much insisted upon, it may not be amiss to search to the Bottom of it. As to the Meaning of it (which must first of all be stated) one

(q) Answ. to the Repref. p. 160.

(r) *Ibid.* p. 232.

would most readily apprehend, that by the *outward Action*, is understood the Material Action, consider'd as separated from the Will or Intention of the Agent. For though we have been told, that the Will or Intention enters into the Essence or Formality of an Action, as that which distinguishes it from an Event or Passion; I must beg Leave to say that this is a mere Arbitrary Assertion, and contrary to the common Use of Language. That Intention enters into the Essence of a Moral Action, I know well enough; and the Reason is plain, because without Intention there can be no Morality. But Action there may be, where there is no Intention; for otherwise all Actions would be Moral Actions, and Philosophers would talk Nonsense when they distinguish them into Voluntary and Involuntary. But not to trouble the Reader with such Niceties as these; we will take them according to their own Explication, and their Meaning is, That the outward Actions of Men consider'd as distinguished (not from the Intention, but) from the inward Motive or Principle of Action, are the only Object of the Magistrate's Concern.

I SAY then that this Notion is absurd, because it makes it to be no Part of the Magistrate's Concern to cultivate and improve the Principles, (I will not say of Religion, for this without doubt was the Thing intended, but the Principles) even of Human and Social Virtue. The Writers upon this Subject have been very fond of late of (s) separating Religion from Civil Government, even so far as to suppose Men incapable of Religion, and yet capable of entering into Society. The Supposition, I presume, they themselves see to be Nonsense, because the same Reason and Understanding which qualifies a Man for Society, brings him also under the Laws of Religion. But it is as good in my Hands, I hope, as it is in theirs; and therefore, to pleasure them, let us for once suppose all Religion banished out of the World, and a Government erected merely upon Maxims of Worldly Policy. Now though we have taken Care to shut out all Religion, here will still be what I call (and I think not improperly) Human and Social Virtue. For Man is still supposed to be a reasonable Creature, enter'd into Society for the Enjoyment of Civil Privileges; and consequently he must, as such, think himself bound to such a Behaviour as will best serve the Interests of Society. Is it now any Part of the Magistrate's Concern to encourage and promote this inward Principle? No, say they, for the Magistrate's Concern reaches no farther than to the outward Behaviour, consider'd as distinguished from the inward Principle. But let them but attend to the Force of their own Rule, and they will find their Mistake. Whatever affects the Publick Civil Good, falls within the Magistrate's Care: If then the Principles of Social Virtue do affect the Publick Civil Good; the Consequence must be that it is the Magistrate's Business to encourage and promote them. And that they do affect the Publick Civil Good is plain from this unanswerable Reason; that without them, that Behaviour in which the Publick Good consists, can never effectually be secured. That Government has always been look'd upon to be in an unsound and tottering Condition, where the Obedience of the Subject stands upon Fear or Private Interest, and not upon an honest Principle of Duty and Affection; and I am confident our Adversaries are of the same Opinion. May we not then from hence venture to infer, that therefore the Concern of the Magistrate extends to the inward Principle, as well as to the outward Action? I shall for once take Leave to make the Experiment, and leave it to their great Sagacity to find out, how it comes to pass, that though according to their own Confession it is the Magistrate's Business to secure the Publick Civil Good; it should yet be no Part of his Business to secure the Means upon which the Publick Civil Good does necessarily depend.

(s) *Ibid.* p. 229.

IN a Word, since, as it is allowed, Men as Subjects, are to be consider'd as Reasonable Creatures entered into Society; it must be the Concern of the Magistrate to provide as much as in him lies, that they perform a Reasonable Obedience; which an Obedience void of the Principles of Social Virtue certainly is not. But how shall the Magistrate encourage Social Virtue? Why if this be all the Difficulty (and I can think of no other) I should hope that it is already removed. The Magistrate may encourage Social Virtue by the same Methods by which (as I have shewn) he may encourage Religion. For that Knowledge of what becomes us as reasonable Creatures; and that Subduction of Appetite and Passion, the Means whereof are evidently in the Magistrate's Hand: These, I say, as they are proper to lead Men to the *Fear of God*, so they are proper to lead them to *Honour the King*. Hard indeed would it be, if it were impossible for the Magistrate by all he can do, to contribute any thing towards effecting that, without which no Government can possibly subsist. But (to mention one thing more) is there nothing in a just, wise, and diligent Administration? Nothing in a Paternal Care and Tenderness over the Subject exemplified by proper Acts of Beneficence towards those who do well, and of Mercy and Clemency even to those who do ill? Do these, I say, tend only to influence the outward Act? Or rather do not they create an inward Principle of Loyalty, and beget that mutual Confidence which supports Society? If not; let no Prince hereafter think himself secure by virtue of such Methods. For there is in this Respect plainly no Difference between him that sways the Sceptre of Righteousness, and him that ruleth with a Rod of Iron.

BUT to return; The Reader is desired to take especial Notice, that the Tendency of what is now offered is only to shew, that the Magistrate's Office is not confined merely to the Outward Behaviour of his Subjects, but that it reaches at least to the Principles of Social Virtue. Let us now try, if you please, whether there be not Room enough for Religion to stand upon the same Footing. And the Case, I think, is evident. For if it be the Magistrate's Concern to cultivate and improve Social Virtue as that without which Society can never be secure; for the same Reason it must also be his Concern to cultivate and improve the Principles of Religion, which are a Means relative to the same End. As Social Virtue is the only sure Foundation of Civil Obedience; so Religion is the only sure Foundation of Social Virtue: Which two Things though they may be distinguished in the Idea, do yet in Fact generally go together. To be under a just Sense of our Duty towards God, and to serve him under the Prospect of those Motives of Obedience which he hath propounded; this, I presume, is what deserves the Name of true Religion. Now he who is thus disposed, must be supposed to be furnished (unless some unhappy Error intervenes) with all those virtuous Principles by which Society is supported and maintained. But take away this, and the Virtue which remains, I fear, will be so small as to be hardly worth the reckoning. For there is no Principle which will be strong enough to hold the Generality of Men, when once the Bands of Religion are untied, and they are under no Manner of Awe from any Being, but those who are like themselves; whose Knowledge they are many times able to deceive, and to whose Power they very frequently find themselves superior. This is so true, that those who upon Principles of *Philosophy and vain Deceit* (as the Apostle speaks) have undertaken to dispute Religion out of the World, when they have been pressed to give an Account, how it has happen'd that all Civilized Nations have agreed in the Belief of a God, and of a Providence, if there were no Foundation for it in that Common Reason which is given to all, have generally answered that it is a Contrivance of State, intended for no other Purpose than to preserve the Peace and Order of Societies. I need not, I presume, stay to answer the Argument; But the Objection it self is an ample Confession, that all Nations in the World have look'd upon Religion, as a necessary Means to support Government; and there is no-
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thing which Experience does more constantly verify. If then the Publick Civil Good cannot, either at all, or so well be secured without Religion, what can be more evident than that it is the Concern of the Civil Magistrate, as he is the Protector of the Publick Civil Good, to take Care of Religion?

THE Result then is this; That the Magistrate as he is the Guardian of the Publick Civil Good, is directly concerned with the outward Behaviour of his Subjects, and that he is indirectly concerned with Religion too, as it is a Principle of outward Action, the Presence or Absence whereof will generally determine the Behaviour of the Subject, either to the Good or Hurt of the Commonwealth. A Proposition so exceeding clear and evident, that one may justly wonder what should lead Men to so much Extravagancy, as, separating the outward Act from the internal Motive or Principle, to confine the Magistrate's Care to the former, as distinguished from the latter. Now the main Foundation of this Mistake (next to that weak Pretence, that it is impossible for the Magistrate to be instrumental in regulating the Inward Principle, which has largely been refuted: Next to this, I say, that which hath contributed most towards leading these Writers into this Mistake) is their taking the Measure of the Magistrate's Office from what falls under his Cognizance when he dispenses Rewards or Punishments. (1) If, say they, *the ACTIONS of Men, without considering the INTERNAL PRINCIPLE from which they proceed, are the Points which lye before the Magistrate, (i. e. when he punisheth Offenders) then neither Religion AS Religion, nor Virtue AS Virtue, are his Proper Concern, but the outward Action ONLY.* That is in short, because in dispensing Punishments the Magistrate considers only the outward Act, therefore his Office reaches no farther than to the outward Act. But certainly this is a very wild Inference! The Reason, and the only Reason, why the Magistrate in these Cases considers only the outward Act, is because he can judge only of the outward Act, *i. e.* he hath generally no certain Rule whereby to determine what the true Motive or Principle is, from whence any Action proceeds. But the Magistrate's being unable to judge of the Inward Principle will never prove that his Office has no Relation to the Inward Principle; because (as may be shewn by a Variety of Instances) a Man's Office, Concern, or Business, may relate to those Things which in the Nature of them are removed from the Reach of his Cognizance. If these Writers pay any Regard to Reason or Scripture, they must acknowledge that it is the proper Concern of every Parent, not merely to regulate the Outward Behaviour of his Child; but to make him truly Virtuous and Religious: And yet it is evident that in rewarding the Child when he does well, or in punishing him when he does ill, the Parent does exactly what the Magistrate does (and he can do no otherwise) *i. e.* he takes Cognizance of the Outward Action only. Again; what is it that the Church takes Cognizance of in judging its Members? Is it not the Outward Act and that only? But is it right, think you, from thence to conclude, that the Church hath no Concern with the Inward Principle? Shall we make the Laws which concern Religion just such *Beauty washes* (I make bold to borrow the Dean of *Chichester's* Comparison) as they have made the Laws of the State?——But to proceed: If the Reason why the Magistrate in these Cases considers not the Internal Principle, be his Inability to judge of it; will you give me Leave to say that if he could judge of it, it would be his Business to consider it? Whether you will, or will not, the Thing is evident. For 1st, As to the Case of Punishment; let us suppose an Offence committed either out of a mistaken Zeal for the Good of the Commonwealth, or upon a Principle of Religion and Conscience; Although, for a Reason which shall hereafter be mentioned, the Magistrate ought not so far to consider the Inward Principle, as not to punish the Offen-

(1) Answ. p. 246.

der; yet, supposing him certainly to know it, he ought thus far to consider it, as to shew all the Favour and Clemency that the Case will admit of, and not punish him with the same Severity that he would punish another, who, through a wicked Contempt of the Magistrate's Authority, should be guilty of the same or of a like Crime. On the other hand, let us suppose no Offence at all committed, *i. e.* no Law of the State transgressed by any Overt Act; I will not ask here whether a formed Intention to offend ought not in Reason to have the same Effect; (for this is besides the present Argument.) But I will go much farther and ask, whether, supposing a Man, without so much as any formed Intention to offend against the Laws of his Country, to be under a settled Principle of Disloyalty or Disaffection to the Government; Whether, I say, in such a Case the Magistrate, if he knew it, would not have a Right to punish him? To me it is evident that he would. For such a Principle being inconsistent with the Publick Security, there is just the same Reason why he should banish such a Subject out of his Dominions, as there is why he should hang the Thief that robs upon the High-way. 2dly, This Point is yet more evident with respect to Rewards, which no Magistrate, who has Sense, ever dispenseth to the Outward Act, any otherwise than as such an Act is consider'd as an Indication of the Inward Principle. When a Prince bestows a Place of Honour or Profit upon one of his Subjects as a Reward for Services done to the Publick, what does he mean? Does he consider these Services merely as Outward Acts beneficial to Society? Certainly not. For admit that the Man be a Traytor in his Heart, and that he served the Publick only to serve himself; will the Magistrate, supposing him to be well assured of this, even then bestow the Reward? If he has Sense, I say, he will not. He considers therefore the Outward Act, as a Sign or Token of the good Disposition, the Presumption of which must always be the proper Reason why any Man is rewarded. What now is the Consequence of these Observations? Why plainly this: That the Magistrate is concerned with the Inward Principle, as well as with the Outward Behaviour. For how comes it to pass that he is obliged to consider the Inward Principle, supposing him to know it, if the Inward Principle be none of his Concern? Is it right, think you, for the Magistrate either in Rewarding or Punishing, to be determined by a Consideration which hath no Relation to the Office he bears? I shall be told perhaps, that the supposing the Magistrate to be able to judge of the Inward Principle alters the Case, and makes that to be his Concern, which otherwise is not his Concern. But this is a Jest: For mere Knowledge can only direct the Exercise of a Power where it already is; it cannot create a Power where it is not. If the Magistrate certainly knew what I dreamt of last Night, my Condition, I conceive, as a Civil Subject would be neither better nor worse; and why? Why because the Magistrate has nothing to do with any one's Dreams. And if he has as little to do with Men's Principles as with their Dreams, what Difference can it make whether he knows them, or whether he knows them not? But the Magistrate has thus much to do with Men's Principles, *viz.* That it is his Business by all possible and lawful Methods, to encourage those good ones upon which the Publick Security depends, and therefore to encourage the Principles of Natural Religion, because, as has been shewn, the Publick Security depends upon them. That he cannot judge of the Inward Disposition, doth in no wise alter the Case. It may be a Reason perhaps why the Success of his Endeavours will be attended with the greater Uncertainty: But it no more proves that Religion is none of his Concern, than a Bishop's or any other Clergyman's Inability to judge of the Inward Disposition, will prove that true Christianity is none of his Concern.

THUS far I have consider'd the Publick Civil Good, only as it is capable of being affected by the Behaviour of the Subject. But, 2. There is another Way (as I observed at first) by which the Publick Civil Good may be affect-

ed, and that is by the Hand of God; sending either Blessing or Cursing upon a Nation; either immediately or by the Interposition of his Creatures, as the Instruments of executing his Will. That the Publick Civil Good is upon this Account, concerned in the Religion of the Subject, is a Point which not only the Scriptures every where bear Witness to, but which even the Heathens acknowledged by the Light of Nature, as appears from several Passages cited by *Grotius*, and by many more which it would, I conceive, be no difficult Matter to lay together. Now the proper Use that is to be made of this Observation is plain and obvious, to wit, That forasmuch as Religion or the Want of it, is the Means of bringing down God's Blessing or his Curse upon any Nation or People; therefore the Magistrate as he tenders the Publick Good, is concerned to provide that God be honoured and obeyed by all who are within the Reach of his Authority. We should look upon that Prince to be extremely wanting in his Duty, who should not use all imaginable Caution to prevent his Subjects from affronting a Potent Neighbour, whom he knew to be in a Condition to fall upon him and ruin his Dominions. And is it right, think you, to be afraid of an earthly Monarch, and not to dread the Sovereign of the World? But this Argument hath been so well urg'd by the Dean of *Chichester* in his *Considerations*, that I need only stay to consider how well it has been answered. The Substance of what has been said comes to this, *viz.* 1. That (*u*) *some* of those Passages in Scripture which are usually alledged on this Occasion, are *Promises and Threatnings*, which respected the **JEWISH Nation ONLY**, the declared **SANCTIONS** of whose *Laws were Temporal*. Now the Thing is true enough, that the *Jewish Law* was enforced by Temporal Sanctions, to which there can be no Doubt but that many of these Passages relate. But this helps not the Business forward in the least: But still there may be other Passages in Scripture which have no peculiar Reference to the *Jews*, and which confirm what (as I observed just now) the Light of Nature teaches, to wit, that it is the Method of God by the direct Interposition of his Providence, to punish any Nation which shall shew a Contempt of his Laws. Are there then any such Passages, or are there not? Why here we are treated with much Reserve. For we are told in Effect, 2. That *all the other Passages*, are *Declarations of the Tendency of good and evil Practices; of what is called Morality and Immorality, to the Publick Safety or Ruin of Nations, in those Methods by which God is resolved in his wise Providence to govern the World*; which is saying no more than what a mere *Fatalist* might say. For by *those Methods by which God hath resolved in his wise Providence to govern the World*, no more may be meant than the general Course and Order of Things, as at first established by God: And then by the *Tendency of good and evil Practices*, must be understood the Natural Effect of good and evil Practices, as resulting from that general Order. So that we are still at a Loss, to know whether it be allowed or disallowed (what is now supposed as warranted from Scripture, to wit,) That God doth at any Time by his Special Providence, interpose to correct the Wickedness of a Nation by Temporal Judgments. But we will suppose (because it is the most charitable Supposition) that it is allowed, and see what the rest of the Answer will come to. It is said then that these Passages *were directed not to Magistrates peculiarly, but to all Men*. No Doubt; and as the People are to make that Use of them which is proper to their Station; so the Magistrate is to make that Use of them which is proper to his. What Use the People ought to make of them is a Point which falls not within the present Question: and therefore it signifies nothing to inquire, whether the Account here given of it be exactly right. But common Sense will teach us this short Lesson, that, forasmuch as the Sins of a Nation are made up of the Sins of particular Persons, every Man should take Care to do his Duty faithfully, lest he be Instru-

(u) Answ. p. 180.

mental in bringing down the Vengeance of God upon his Country. And what is the Use that the Magistrate ought to make of these Declarations? Why it seems they are *Arguments to all in Authority, to do their utmost to restrain all such Outward Acts as have that evil Tendency* — How! Outward Acts do you say? Is it enough to appease an angry God to restrain the Outward Act only? Can the Searcher of Hearts be deceived by an Outward Appearance? This carries too gross a Sound; and therefore it is immediately added — *and to encourage every Thing which promotes TRUE GOODNESS as far as it lies within their Reach.* Here's something in this! For this is the very Inference which the *Dean* has drawn, and which every Man of common Sense must draw; to wit, That it is the Magistrate's Concern to encourage true Goodness, or (which is all one) true Religion; which he doth, who encourages that which promotes true Goodness. But what Sense is there in acknowledging that the Magistrate is concerned to encourage true Goodness to the utmost of his Power, and declaring it at every Turn, that the Magistrate with all his Power cannot encourage it? To say that the Magistrate is bound to encourage true Religion so far as it is in his Power to do it, is to suppose that in some Degree or other it is in his Power to do it, or it is to say nothing. But this is what His Lordship flatly denies; and therefore at P. 232. he speaks more roundly and undisguisedly, and says, that as to God's Judgments, *the Concern of the Civil Magistrate in this Affair is to do his own Duty conscientiously, which is, to discourage all those OUTWARD PRACTICES injurious to Society, which are founded upon Impiety from whatever Root they proceed.* And this it seems is all; For, adds he, *if this be all he CAN do towards it, then this is all that can be implied in his Office, or expected of him.* Now this for my Life I cannot understand. For since the Reason why God sends his Judgments upon any Nation, is now supposed to be its Impiety: The Argument to the Civil Magistrate is either none at all, or it is this, that he is to remove Impiety, which is not done by removing the Outward Act only. If indeed the Magistrate cannot encourage Religion, nor therefore remove Impiety; this is a Reason sufficient to shew that it is none of his Concern, and consequently that he can have no Concern in such Passages as these: But whether he can or cannot, is a Point which I shall now very willingly leave to the Reader: and if it appears that he can, the Consideration before us is a good Argument to prove that he ought to do it by His Lordship's own Confession.

It appears then, I hope, by this Time, that the Care of Religion, by and under the Law of Nature, does belong to the Office of the Magistrate, consider'd as he is the Guardian of the Publick Civil Good. It remains now to be consider'd whether securing the Lives, Liberties, and Possessions of the Subject, be the only End of the Magistrate's Appointment; or whether his Office hath not a direct, immediate Relation to Religion, as well as to the Civil or Worldly Interests of Men. The Writers on the other Side, with one Consent maintain that it hath not: But of good Reasons to support this Assertion there is every where a great Scarcity. His Lordship contents himself only with observing, that if (w) *you take away the Necessity and Conveniency of Men's entring into Societies for Protection and Defence in their Civil Concerns; you take away all Necessity and Usefulness of the Magistrate's Office:* And this he thinks to be an *unanswerable Argument*, that *those Concerns* are the *only End* to which the Office of the Magistrate is relative. Now the Observation without doubt is true: For the Necessity and Conveniency of Men's entring into Society for Protection and Defence, resulting from the Corruption and Depravity of Mankind, whereby they are disposed to offer Violence one to another; To take away this Necessity and Conveniency, is to take away that Depravity, *i. e.* it

(w) Ibid. p. 175.

is to suppose that all Men are as they ought to be; upon which Foot there would be no Need of a Magistrate, either for Protection or any thing else. But now if I should say, That the same Depravity which renders Society useful and necessary with Respect to Men's Civil Interests, renders it also useful and necessary with Respect to their Religious; and that the Office of the Magistrate was appointed with a View to this latter End, as well as with a View to the former, (which I hope is Sense at least;) this *unanswerable Argument* (as it is called) would dwindle away into a mere Nothing, and leave the Matter just in the same Condition in which it found it. — But I pursue the Question in its natural Order; of which that the Meaning may be the better understood, I must observe, That Religion, consider'd as it is under the Law of Nature, and Civil Interest, can never in Fact be separated the one from the other. All Deviations from the Eternal Law of Reason, do directly or indirectly, in a greater Measure or in a less, affect the Happiness of Civil Society: Upon which Account, as I have shewn, it is the Magistrate's proper Concern, to provide (as far as in him lies) that Obedience be paid to the Dictates of Reason. But the Point now is, whether this be the ONLY Argument to prove that the Magistrate is concerned with Religion, or whether the Care of Religion does THEREFORE ONLY belong to the Magistrate, BECAUSE Religion affects the Publick Civil Good. I maintain the Negative, and shall endeavour to prove, that the Magistrate is concerned with Religion upon its own Account; insomuch that if you could suppose Religion to have no Relation to Publick Civil Good, the Care of Religion would still belong to the Magistrate's Office.

BUT before I enter upon this, it will be proper to consider, how or by what Way the Care of Religion may be supposed conveyable to the Magistrate: Because it hath been insinuated by some Modern Writers, as if the Thing were in its own Nature impossible. This seems to have been the Case of Mr. Locke, who perpetually supposes that to vest the Magistrate with the Care of Religion, is (x) to *abandon the Care of one's own Salvation, and blindly to leave it to the Choice of the Magistrate to prescribe what Faith or Worship we shall embrace*. Now this (as he truly observes) is impossible: *For no Man can, if he would, conform his Faith to the Dictates of another: i. e. It is in no Man's Power to believe just as another would have him believe; and he might have added, that no Man has or can have such a Right over himself, as in Matters which concern Religion and God's Worship to lay himself under an Obligation, to act according to the Dictates of another, in Opposition to the Dictates of his own Mind.* (y) *It would be absurd if a Man about to enter into Society should stipulate with the Person design'd as supreme Magistrate in this Manner; "I submit my Will to yours, even in this, that I will love, worship, and trust in God according to your liking;" Or thus; "I will confide in you, rather than in God;" Or "I will forbear to love, worship, and obey him if you please." Or "I will make Use of such Signs or outward Expressions of Worship as destroy, or are inconsistent with the Nature of God, if you command me."* This I say is absurd, because it supposes it possible for Men to divest themselves of that Relation which they bear to God as the supreme Lawgiver. But then it is to be considered, that to vest the Magistrate

(x) 1st Letter concerning Toleration. p. 9.

(y) Absurdum foret si futurus Civis ita Imperatori se obstringeret; Submittō Voluntatem meam Voluntati tuæ etiam in Hoc, ut ad Arbitrium tuum velim amare, venerari Deum, in Deo confidere; aut plus tibi Fidei quam Deo adhibere; aut te volente ejus Amorem, Venerationem, Obsequium omittere; aut tuo Jussu ejusmodi Signa adhibere quæ Naturam Dei destruunt. Thus the Learned Puffendorf in his Treatise De Habitu Religionis Christianæ ad Vitam Civilem, p. 17, 18. But it is to be observed that the Baron does not observe this as a direct Proof that the People cannot stipulate with the Magistrate about Matters of Religion (as Mr. Locke has done;) nor does he indeed any where teach any such Thing. But the Design of it was to shew that Men have not the same Right to give up their Religious Liberty, as they have to give up their Civil; or that they cannot traffick with their Consciences, as they may with their Money and Estates: A Proposition more than enough evident.

with the Publick Care of Religion carries along with it no such Obligation as is here supposed. For the Publick Care of Religion consists (as has been shewn) in providing by Law, both that Instruction be duly administered, and that it may have its proper Effect upon the Minds of Men: And the Methods before specified for the doing of both are of such a Sort, as that the giving the Magistrate a Power to make Use of them implies no Sort of Promise, or Stipulation blindly to submit to whatever the Magistrate shall think fit to appoint as touching Religion. If I consent that the Magistrate shall have Authority to distribute yearly out of the Publick Stock, so much Money as he shall judge to be necessary and convenient for the Maintenance of Publick Teachers, I do not hereby so much as pretend to engage my self not to examine their Doctrines, and either to embrace or reject them, as I shall see most reasonable. And if I consent yet farther, that he shall have Power to make Use of outward Restraint, as a Bridle to Wantonness, I still leave my self at Liberty, either to differ from the Religion of the Magistrate, and submit to the Inconveniences which shall be laid upon me, or to adhere to it and avoid them. In short, to vest the Magistrates with the Care of Religion, is not to abandon the Care of our own Salvation, but to give up a Part of our Liberty and Property in order to promote the Salvation of our selves and of others; which if any one thinks to be a weak and imprudent Thing, I hope in Time to convince him of his Mistake; but surely no Man can say that it is impossible. I shall only add that this Objection has very little to do with the Controversy, under the View in which we are now considering it: For the Supposition of a Diversity of Opinions about Religion (upon which it rests) must relate chiefly to Points of Revealed Religion; because concerning the Doctrines of Natural Religion, there is and always has been a general Agreement.

IT being clear then that a Right to take Care of Religion, is in the Nature of it capable of being conveyed to the Magistrate, I come to the main Inquiry *viz.* Whether it doth not appear that such a Right does in Fact belong to him, from Considerations which have no Relation to the Publick Civil Good. For the determining which Point, it will be necessary to inquire into the Nature and Design of Commonwealths, it being certain that nothing can be the End of the Magistrate's Office which may not be consider'd as an End of Men's entering into Society. Our Adversaries consider a Commonwealth as a Number of Men entered into Society merely for Temporal or Worldly Ends, and therefore say that Worldly Things are the sole Object of the Magistrate's Concern. On the contrary, I consider a Commonwealth as a Number of Men associated not only for Worldly Ends but for the Ends of Religion, and thence infer that his Care extends it self to Religion likewise. This is the Difference, for the Decision of which, since we are call'd back to the Original Institution of Commonwealths, thither therefore we will go. I shall only premise, that this Inquiry does not lead us to consider what was in Fact the End propounded, when Men first of all enter'd into Society: For besides that this is impossible to be ascertained, at this Distance of Time, I do not see that it signifies any thing to the Purpose. Mr. Locke tells us that (2) *there are Nations in the West-Indies who have no other End of their Society, but their Mutual Defence, against their Common Enemies: In these (says he) their Captain or Prince is Sovereign in time of War; But in time of Peace, neither he, nor any body else, has any Authority over any of the Society.* Now had this been the Nature of the first Commonwealth, I see not how this can determine the Nature and Constitution of such Bodies in after Ages: For Commonwealths were at first framed for such Ends and Purposes as

(2) 2d. Letter. p. 54.

were then found to be needful, which probably were not (a) ALL that longer Experience taught to be so. If at first Men thought it sufficient to guard themselves only against Common Enemies, it might be and was afterwards found necessary to secure themselves also against Mutual Wrongs; and no one doubts but that (notwithstanding any former Precedent) a Commonwealth may be as justly founded upon both these Views as upon one of them only. So that I say, admitting it for Truth, that at first there was not the least Mixture of Religious Concerns in the framing of Commonwealths; yet if in after Ages it was found reasonable and fitting to take in the Concerns of Religion, the Right to do it cannot be questioned, and the Magistrate's Authority to interpose in the Affairs of Religion, in Commonwealths so constituted, will be plain and indisputable.

THE true and only Way therefore to come to a Decision of this Point, will be to consider what Ends or Purposes, a Number of Men in a State of Liberty, would by a right Use of their Reason, most naturally propose in framing themselves into a Compleat and Perfect Commonwealth. For a Commonwealth framed upon those Ends must be a Commonwealth framed according to the Original Institution of such Bodies, *i. e.* if not according to what Commonwealths at first actually were, yet according to what in Reason they ought to have been. This is the only proper and pertinent Sense I am able to put upon this Phrase; So that the Question at last amounts to this, whether it be in the Nature of the Thing reasonable and fitting that the Magistrate should be vested with the Care of Religion or not. The Reader doubtless has observed that hitherto I have been contented to argue with our Adversaries upon their own Hypothesis; to wit, That the Supreme Authority in every Commonwealth is originally founded upon the Consent or Voluntary Agreement of the People: And this is the Hypothesis upon which I intend to proceed, because it will signify little to confute Men upon Principles which they do not acknowledge.

THUS much then I am willing to grant to our Opposers, *viz.* That, supposing a Number of Men in a State of Liberty, the first and leading Motive to induce them to abridge themselves of that Liberty, and coalesce into a Body Politick, would, probably, be the securing themselves from Violence and Wrong. For the Conveniencies and Inconveniencies of this present Life, being the Things which ordinarily make the quickest and most sensible Impressions upon the Mind of Man; 'tis natural to suppose, that a Concern for these would on such an Occasion be uppermost in their Thoughts. But then there is one Question which I very much want to have clearly resolved; and that is, Why this Concern for Civil Advantages must needs shut out all Concern for Religion; or, Why those same Men who enter into Society for the Security of their Lives, Liberties, and Possessions, may not also, in entering into Society, have a farther Regard to the Honour of the Supreme Being. The Case you know supposes that the Men, who are now framing themselves into a Commonwealth, do make a right Use of their Reason: Now where Reason is rightly exercised, there must always be a dutiful Reverence to God, and a just Concern for the Honour of his Laws; which those who are possessed of it, will take Care to preserve, not in themselves only, but in others also, to the uttermost of their Power. If then it be apparent to Reason, that the Benefit of Civil Government extends it self to Religion, as well as to Worldly Good; why, I pray, MUST a reasonable Man, or rather how CAN a reasonable Man, be solicitous about the latter, to neglect the former? Or, why will not his Reverence to God lead him to provide for the One, as well as his Regard to himself leads

(a) See Mr. Barbeyrac's Note upon Puffendorf of the Law of Nature. Book 7. Chap. 1. §. 7.

him to provide for the Other? The Dependence of Religion upon Society every one must be supposed to have experienced in his own Family. For Families are Societies: And as every Father or Master is the Head of a little Commonwealth, so every Magistrate is but the Head of a large Family. Tell me then, if you can, why those who think it right as Fathers or Masters, to make Use of their Authority to secure (as much as in them lies) the Honour of God, should not think it right to vest the Magistrate with the same Power; or why it is reasonable that Religion should be taken Care of in Private Families, and not reasonable that it should be taken Care of in the Commonwealth.

If these Considerations be duly attended to, it will not, I conceive, appear so unexceptionably clear, that Commonwealths, according to their Original Institution, respect the Civil Interests of Men exclusive of the Ends of Religion. But whether it be, that they thought it a Point too plain to need any Proof, or too embarrass'd to admit of any; so it is, that the Writers upon this Subject have generally taken it for granted. The Learned *Puffendorf* indeed must stand as an Exception, who (in the Treatise before referred to) not only asserts the Thing, but gives his Reasons for it; which, for the Reader's Satisfaction, I shall here set down in his own Words. (*b*) Since, says he, *Religion and the Worship of God may as well be exercised by a few, as by many; as well in a small, as in a large Congregation; There was therefore no Need upon that Account, to frame Societies made up of a great and powerful Number of Men. Especially since those Injuries to which Mankind was exposed, and which at first induced Men to form themselves into Commonwealths, had no Tendency to turn them aside from the Worship of God; but only to deprive them of their Lives, their Liberties, and their Possessions. Nor does it in it self, or in the Nature of the Thing, at all concern Religion and God's Worship, that a Man lives in Society with many; since every single Person in this Affair stands upon his own Bottom; nor is a Man therefore Religious, because he converses with others that are so. Moreover, those Masters of Families who lived before there were any Commonwealths, were as remarkable for their Piety, as any who have lived in Commonwealths afterwards.* This is all that this deservedly esteemed Writer has offer'd to support a Notion whose Proofs ought to be as strong as the Consequences of it are great. But all this (in my humble Opinion) is little to the Purpose. For though it be true, that the entering into Society is not necessary to secure to a Man the Exercise of his Religion, as it is to the Enjoyment of his Life, Liberty, and Possessions: Though a Man's Religion is never the better merely for his being in Society, nor the worse for his being out of it; and though there may have been as good Men before the Institution of Commonwealths, as there have been since: Though, I say, all this (which I conceive is the whole of what this Reasoning amounts to) be true; yet it will never follow from hence, that Religion may not receive very great Advantages from Society, and that in framing of a Commonwealth it is not reasonable to have a Regard to these Advantages, as well as to the Advantages of this carnal Life. You and I may be as Religious in a Desert as in a City, and serve God as faithfully, whether we are under any Restraint from Human Laws, or whether we are under none; *i. e.* if we are so disposed. But who sees not that the wholesome Laws of Society operate upon the Disposition it self, and lead many to the Fear of God, who, if left wholly to themselves, would have trampled his Authority under their Feet? Still therefore, I say, the Reason is wanting why this End should have no Place in the framing of a Common-

(*b*) Cum Religio & Divinus Cultus non minus commodè a paucis quàm a multis Hominibus, in exiguo quàm magno Coetu exerceri queat; non opus fuit ob eam Causam Societates struere, magno ac valido Hominum Numero constantès. Præsertim cum increbescentes Humano in Genere Injuriae, quæ mortales primùm ad institucdas Societates Civiles subegerunt, non huc tenderent ut alios a Cultu Dei averterent, sed ut Vitâ, Libertate, ac Bonis ipsos spoliarent. Neque etiam per se, ad Pietatem & exprobandum Dei Cultum facit, in Societate multorum Hominum vivere, cum quilibet Homo pro se cultum suum Deo adprobare debeat, nec ided pius quis sit, quis cum aliis piis degit. Et qui ante Civitates institutas vixere Patres-familias, non minus Pietatis Laude celebres sunt, quàm qui post in Civitatibus vixere. *Ibid.* p. 15.

wealth; or why those, who arm the Magistrate with Power to repel all Violences offer'd to themselves, should not also vest him with Authority to suppress all Insults offer'd to God, whose Honour they ought not to set at a lower Rate than their own Safety.

BUT lest any one should think that it was this Author's Meaning to deny, or that in Reason it ought to be denied, that Religion can receive any Advantage from the Methods of Civil Administration; though this Point has been largely spoken to in the foregoing Chapter, it may not yet be amiss to pursue it somewhat farther. That the Magistrate's making Use of the Motives of this World, 1. As an Encouragement to the Industry of Teachers, And, 2. As a Check to the Levity and Wantonness of the Hearers; that this, I say, is a very proper Means to promote both the Knowledge and the Practice of true Religion, abundantly appears from the Reasons there laid down, which there is no Occasion for me here to repeat. What I have now to add, is that this is not only a very proper Means, but a very necessary one; so necessary that without it Religion cannot in any tolerable Measure be maintained in the World. How far this Observation holds with Respect to revealed Religion, shall be consider'd in its proper Place: At present we are concerned with Religion as it is under the Law of Nature, which results from the true Knowledge both of God and of our selves. Now though this Knowledge is founded in Reason, and must therefore be discoverable by Reason; yet since it is the Result of Reason rightly exercised and carefully improved; this plainly leaves Room for all those Errors to creep in, which Want of Judgment, or Want of Consideration, exposes us to. How great and how many such Errors may be, the Heathen World before the Coming of Christ (to say nothing of those Notions since, to whom the Preaching of the Gospel never came) are a lamentable Instance; among whom the most stupid Idolatry every where prevailed, and the vilest Abominations were practis'd under the Name and Colour of Religion: The Reason of which was not that God had *left himself without Witness*; for the Works of the Creation were a sufficient Evidence of his *Eternal Power and Godhead*, and that Natural Faculty of discerning between Good and Evil, which in a greater or in a lesser Degree was common to all, would, if well employed, have led Men generally to a reasonable Service. But the Case was, that what through the Weakness of some, and what through the Carelessness and Inconsiderateness of others, (occasioned by Pride, Sensuality, and Worldly-mindedness,) the Evidences of Truth were stifled and suppress'd, and Reason, which should have governed the Man, became the Slave to Appetite and Passion. Now from these Considerations, (which no good Writer (c) hath fail'd to take Notice of upon proper Occasions) the Necessity of an Order of Teachers, to explain and inculcate the Duties of Natural Religion, hath rightly been inferred; and we have the Testimony of one, whose Word, I presume, will weigh more with some than the Reasons of a Sober Writer, that such an Office(d) is *absolutely necessary to the Peace and Happiness of Society; i. e.* (I suppose) to the securing that Morality and Good Behaviour upon which the Peace and Happiness of Society depends. Now if particular Instruction be necessary to secure Morality, it must be equally so, whether you consider it as relative to the Good of Society, or whether you consider it abstractedly under the Notion of Religion only: And pray tell me, how it is possible to engage a sufficient Number of Men to employ themselves in this useful and necessary Work, without making some Publick Provision for their Maintenance and Encouragement. Undoubtedly as the general Corruption we are now speaking of, was owing principally to the great Want of Teachers, so this Want of Teachers was owing to the Neglect of the

(c) See in particular Dr. Clark's *Evid. of Nat. and Rev. Relig. Prop.* 5, 6.

(d) Independent Whig. Numb. 4.

Heathen Magistrates. In maintaining those Superstitious Rites which constituted the external Part of their Worship, they were indeed more than enough diligent: But Morality was no where publicly taught but in the Schools of the Philosophers, who by their eternal Wranglings and Contentions had sublimed it into a Science, suited only to nice and speculative Heads; and consequently more proper to sooth the Pride and Vanity, than to reform the Manners of their Hearers. Besides, those Parts of their Doctrine which were plain and instructive, were concealed from those who most wanted Instruction, I mean the Vulgar. For these Philosophers subsisting only upon those Stipends or Salaries which they received from their Pupils as the Price of their Labour; those who had no Money, were almost sure to have as little Knowledge; the only Remedy left being the having Recourse to their Writings, which very few were able to understand. There were indeed some brave, disinterested Spirits, who, upon the mere Prospect of doing Good, made it their Business by plain and wholesome Instruction, to endeavour the Reformation of Mankind, of which *Socrates* stands recorded as a notable Example: But such Instances were exceeding rare; and generally speaking, those who were well enough qualified for such a Work, thought it enough to take Care of their own Affairs, leaving every one his Neighbour to shift for himself as well as he was able.

FROM this Cause, I say, it happened that gross Ignorance prevailed over the Face of the whole Earth; which sufficiently shews how necessary the Care of the Magistrate in providing for the due and regular Administration of Instruction is, even under the Law of Nature. But there is one Thing yet which shews the Magistrate's Care to be farther necessary, and that is the great Aversion in Mankind to attend upon the Use of those Means which are necessary to lead them to the true Knowledge of God and of themselves, and the greater still to frame their Lives and Conversations agreeably to what they are taught, and do indeed sufficiently understand. This Proneness to Evil, Philosophers in all Ages have observed and lamented, and it is what every one more or less, experiences in himself; the Reason of which being evidently founded in the Irregularities of our Fleishly Appetites, the restraining these by the present Application of Worldly Motives, must therefore be not only a proper, but a necessary Help towards leading us to Virtue. Mr. *Bayle* has observed upon some Occasion, That *(e)* *Mankind are too cold and remiss when they are spur'd on by nothing but Reason*; which he supposes to be the Case (as indeed it is) when they have no other Motive in View but the Prospect of Good or Evil to come. Now if this be right, those surely have shewn themselves to be very cold and negligent Reasoners, who are for leaving Truth to shift for it self, and laying no other Restraint upon Men, than what their own Reason lays them under, as if they could want no other Motive. But what do they say for this? Why, that *Men would then be free from all Discouragements in their Inquiries after Truth*, and judge of all Things *with the greatest Impartiality*: And when the Truth is by this Means found out, they are, by the same bountiful Way of Reasoning, set free from all farther Discouragements, and supposed upon the mere Strength of its Evidence, forthwith to pursue what they apprehend to be their Duty. Now all this, for ought I can tell, might be right, if Man were such a Creature as our Adversaries might wish him to be: But taking him as in Fact he is, (which is the fair Way) the Supposition has no Foundation in Reason, nor is it at all justified by Experience. To lay aside the Use of all Worldly Motives (which is what they plead for) is not to destroy Lust and Appetite, but to leave them to their full Swing. Now if there be any Thing plain from Experience, this is plain, that where Men's Passions are left to reign without Controul, they commonly degenerate into Brutes, or something worse. If the

(e) Cited by Barbeyrac, in the Place above quoted.

great, and indeed the only Thing which discourages Men from inquiring after the Truth be the Prevalency of their Fleſhly Appetites, 'tis Nonſenſe to pretend that Men are under no Diſcouragements where Paſſion has the utmoſt Room to prevail: 'tis therefore alſo abſurd to imagine that Men can want no other Motive to lead them to Virtue than the Evidence of Truth, becauſe thoſe ſame Paſſions which hinder them from inquiring after the Truth at firſt, may as well hinder them from obeying it afterwards. But if any Man thinks that there is no Senſe in what I ſay, let him ask himſelf this one plain Queſtion: What is it that makes the Uſe of Worldly Motives neceſſary to ſupport Civil Government? Is it not this, that were Men left under the Influence of pure Reaſon only, they would for the moſt part, upon the Proſpect of preſent Pleaſure or Profit, act unreaſonably? Certainly it is; For if Men were diſpoſed to do what they ought to do, there would be no Occaſion to put the Sword into the Magiſtrate's Hand. Now if outward Reſtraint be for this Reaſon neceſſary to the Ends of Civil Government, it muſt for the ſame Reaſon be neceſſary to the Ends of Religion: And he who without any Regard had to this Conſideration, ſhall draw up Schemes for the Advancement of Religion, will but (as we ſay) make Laws for *Utopia*, and imitate the Folly of that Builder, who with great Labour and Expence ſhould rear up a Fabrick without conſidering the Dimensions and Properties of the Creatures it is intended for.

IN ſhort, conſidering Man as he really is, compounded of a Soul and Body, diſtracted with Paſſions, and loaded with Infirmities, the Interests of Religion will appear then only ſecure, when ſuch a Method is made Uſe of as has a due Regard to both. And ſo far am I from believing, that if Worldly Motives were wholly laid aſide, and Truth and Virtue were attended with no greater preſent Advantages than Error and Wickedneſs; ſo far, I ſay, am I from believing that thoſe bleſſed Effects would follow, which ſome Men are ſo apt to fancy to themſelves, that I muſt either lay aſide that little Reaſon, and forget that ſmall Experience of the World, which I have, or look for the direct contrary. Divine Truths, inſtead of being conſider'd with the greateſt Impartiality, would ordinarily, I am afraid, be but little thought of. Inſtead of ſerving God *in Spirit and in Truth*, Men would generally grow into a careleſs Neglect of him and his Worſhip: And inſtead of being Sincere in Religion, would, if they choſe any at all, chuſe, not that which Reaſon after their moſt diligent Inquiries ſhould lead them to, (for ſuch Industry would rarely be found) but that which ſhould be moſt agreeable to their own capricious Humours, and ſuperſtitious Opinions, or beſt ſerved their particular Worldly Views. This Argument has a peculiar Force, with Reſpect to Religion under the View in which we are now conſidering it, *i. e.* as diſcoverable by the Light of Nature; which though indeed it gives a very ſtrong Evidence of the Rewards and Punishments of a Life to come, yet this Evidence is not ſo well adapted to common Underſtandings, nor does it come up to the Fulneſs of that which Revelation affords us. But ſuppoſing Natural and Revealed Religion to be equal in this Reſpect, the Argument will yet maintain its Ground: For the Motives of a Life to come being at too great a Diſtance to affect the Paſſions, muſt ſtill come under the Notion of a Rational Motive, and can operate upon us only as ſuch.

Now then let us ſtop a while, and once more ask the Queſtion, Why, ſince the Care of the Magiſtrate is not only uſeful, but even neceſſary, to the Support and Maintenance of true Religion, this End ſhould have no Place in the Conſideration of thoſe who are about to frame themſelves into a Body Politick. Surely in making ourſelves the Subjects of Men, we do not ceaſe to be the Subjects of God: His Will therefore ſhould be our Rule, to which the Nature and Reaſon of Things ſeem in this Caſe to be as plain a Direction as

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can be given. Will you suffer me to leave the whole Matter with you in a few Words? If it be the Will of God that we should serve and obey Him, the Means which he proposeth for this End, must be adapted to the Circumstances under which he hath created us. Now you say, that God hath proposed to lead us to the Obedience of himself purely by the Strength of Rational Motives; and I say, that if God had made us not Men, but Angels, he could have done no otherwise. I do not think that God ought to have laid, or indeed that consistently he could have laid such a Restraint upon Man's Will, as that his Wickedness should not be able to frustrate the Measures of his Providence: But I say that Originally, and in General, the End and the Means must bear a due Proportion the one to the other, and therefore that it is not consistent with the Wisdom and Goodness of God, to give us Passions, and yet to deal with us as if we had none. Nor hath he thus dealt with us in other Cases. We are born under the Restraints of Human Authority; and the Paternal Care reaches to Religion, as well as to the outward Decency of Behaviour. Wherein lies the Fitness of this Procedure? Why in this, that we are born Weak and Passionate Creatures: And do we cease to be such when we become Men? I should be glad to find it; but if not, why must we presently be let loose from ALL Human Authority, when the Foundation of it (though in a lesser Degree) continues to be the same? Again; Let us consider how God hath dealt with us as to the Affairs of this lower World. His Design in creating us (I take it for granted) was to make us Happy both here and hereafter. The Foundation of our future Happiness is our Obedience to HIM, consider'd as his Subjects; and the Foundation of our present Happiness is the Observance of those Rules which are proper to us as Creatures, dependent one upon another. Now pray what is the Method which God hath made Use of to lead us to this latter Sort of Happiness? Hath he left us merely under the Influence of Rational Motives? No; He knew that he had given us Passions as well as Reason. He knew the Power of those Passions, and foresaw that had he left the Government of them merely to Reason, the World would soon have been in an Uproar; and Men would have worried and torn each other like so many Bears or Tygers. He hath therefore brought us under the Laws of the Civil Magistrate, whom he hath vested with the Power of dispensing Rewards and Punishments; that by the Application of present Motives those might be brought to Reason, who would otherwise act in Opposition to Reason. But is God, think you, more careful of our Temporal Happiness, than of our Eternal? Hath he consider'd our Weakness and Depravity in the one Case, and paid no Regard to it in the other? Hath he in the smallest Matters dealt with us according to what we are, and in the greatest of all hath he dealt with us according to what we are not? I must alter my Notion of God ere I can believe it.

THIS, Reader, is what I have to offer, to shew that Religion is directly the Concern of the Civil Magistrate: Of how great Weight it is I must leave to your Discretion. For my own Part I declare I see not any Thing than can be alledged against it, except it be this, That by this Method there is great Danger, lest the Care of Religion should fall into ill Hands, who, instead of applying the Motives of this World on the Side of Truth, shall make Use of them to subvert and destroy the Truth. Now this being our Adversaries grand and capital Objection, and the only Difficulty indeed that attends upon the Subject, I shall therefore be sure not to overlook it. But because it doth not relate purely to Natural Religion, but also, and that most principally, to the Doctrines of Revelation; I think it will be more proper to defer the Consideration of it till afterwards.

C H A P. III.

Of the Magistrate's Right to encourage true Religion; wherein is shewn, 2dly, How this Right stands under the Gospel Revelation.

IT being clear then that the Magistrate has a Right to encourage true Religion, by and under the Law of Nature; our next Business must be to consider how the Case stands under the Light of Revelation. In pursuing which Point, I do not purpose to begin with the Old Testament; For that under the Law the Magistrate was by divine Appointment vested with the Care of Religion is allowed on all Hands, and therefore there needs to be no Dispute about it. But then they tell us that this was a Thing peculiar to the Legal Dispensation, which being entirely distinct from the Evangelical, there can therefore be no arguing from the one to the other. Now this I confess, that the Magistrate's having a Right under the Law to take Care of Religion, is of it self no direct Proof that such a Right is also vested in the Christian Magistrate: But then I think also that it is of great Weight, considered as a collateral Evidence; and how far the Argument will go, I shall not forget to take Notice at a more proper Season. At present I go to the Gospel, and the Point is, Whether, as the Magistrate under the Law of Nature has a Right to encourage Religion, as taught by the Law of Nature; so the Magistrate under the Gospel, *i. e.* the Christian Magistrate, has not also a Right to encourage Religion as taught by the Gospel.

It has afore been observed, and I presume it will readily be allowed, that what Right the Magistrate always had by the Law of Nature; the same Right and no other he has still under the Gospel, unless the Gospel hath made any Difference. The Question therefore is, Whether, so far as a general Right to encourage true Religion is concerned, the Gospel hath made any Difference or not; and I beg Leave to say it hath made none. For if there be any Difference, that Difference must arise from hence, *viz.* either, 1. That the Gospel hath by some positive Command prohibited the Christian Magistrate to concern himself with its Religion; or, 2. That, in the Nature of the Thing, there is not the same Reason why the Christian Magistrate should concern himself with the Religion of the Gospel; as there is that the Magistrate not Christian should concern himself with the Religion of Nature. If I say there be any Difference between these two Cases, it must necessarily stand upon one or the other of these Foundations: For what stronger Argument can you desire to shew, That the Christian Magistrate has a Right to encourage Christianity, than this, *viz.* That the Reason of the Thing enforceth it, and that the Gospel forbids it not? Now that the Gospel no where forbids the Christian Magistrate to encourage Christianity, must be evident to any one who has ever read the Gospel; and whether it is reasonable for him to do it, will easily appear by looking back to the Arguments that have been alledged in the foregoing Chapter, and considering whether what they infer with Respect to Natural Religion, they do not infer with Regard to Revelation also.

IN examining this Point you may remember, that I argued first of all from the End of the Magistrate's Office, consider'd as he is the Guardian of the Publick Civil Good. And under this Head I observed, That if it be the Business of the Magistrate to secure the Happiness of Civil Societies; it must be his Business to secure the Practice of true Religion, upon which the Happiness of Society necessarily depends; and that 1. as the Happiness of Society has a necessary Dependence upon the Behaviour of the Subject, upon which Religion, or the Want of it, must always have a very sensible Influence; and, 2. as the

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Happiness of Society is concerned in the Pleasure or Displeasure of Almighty God, who blesteth those who pay a due Reverence to his Name, and frequently punisheth whole Nations *for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein*. Now as to the first of these two Reasons, it must be acknowledged, that directly and immediately it relates to the Principles of Natural Religion only; because the Performance of Natural Duties, *i. e.* the Duties of Morality, implies all that good Behaviour which is necessary to the Being, or Well-being of a Civil Society consider'd as such. It is not essential to the Being of Civil Government that the Members of it are Christians; nor does a Man's Faith, with Respect to revealed Truths, render him a better Subject any otherwise than as it leads him to better Manners, *i. e.* as it makes him a more Moral Man. But true Morality may subsist in those who have no Faith; and if it does, the Habitudo which they bear to Civil Society (so far as this Reason carries us) will be the very same.

It is nevertheless proper to observe, that though Moral Virtue may subsist even in those who have no Faith, yet that Morality is best secured by the Religion of the Gospel, the Precepts and Motives of which are by all acknowledged to be both an Improvement and an Enforcement of the Law of Nature: And by Consequence that the Magistrate is still concerned to take Care of Christianity, if not for its own Sake, yet for the Sake and on the Account of Morality. And this I would have understood not only of Christianity in general and at large; but of its particular Branches. For the whole subsists by its Parts; and whatever weakens or destroys one Article of Faith, has a manifest Tendency to weaken and destroy all the rest. It must farther be observed, That there is no one Part of the Christian Doctrine which does not one Way or another, in a greater Degree or in a less, contribute towards the Advancement of Virtue and Piety. For either it is subservient to some greater Point, upon which the Certainty of our Religion does more immediately depend: Either it directly Points out to us our Duty, or administers some Help to make the Performance of it more easy to us, or furnishes us with some wise and weighty Considerations, why we ought to be diligent and industrious in our Heavenly Calling. If there is Room for any Exception in this Case, it should seem to lye against the Positive Institutions of the Gospel. But we must not fasten so great a Reproach upon the Author and Finisher of our Faith, as to suppose that these External Rites are useless, insignificant Ceremonies. We should rather consider them (for such indeed they are) as proper Helps to the Infirmities of Flesh and Blood, and as Instruments ordained by God to secure that inward essential Holiness, which is the End of our Profession. There is no Need for me to enlarge upon these Points, because they contain no more than what every Christian I presume will readily acknowledge, and what any Man of common Sense may easily understand. I shall only remark that what is true of the Original and Standing Laws of the Gospel, of which Christ himself is the immediate Author; is proportionably true of those By-Laws (if I may so call them) relating to Order and Discipline, which are at any Time appointed by Persons acting by Authority under him; the true Use whereof undoubtedly is, the securing the Profession of a right Faith, and the Practice of an acceptable Obedience. So that upon the whole I cannot perceive, but that, in virtue of this first Reason, Christianity, in the full Latitude wherein that Word may be understood, falls under the Magistrate's Care, though in a more remote indirect Way.

BUT then, 2. As to the other of these two Reasons, this (without any Sort of Difference or Distinction) holds in its full Force, as well with Respect to Revealed as Natural Religion. For that which God is here supposed to punish a Nation for, is the Wickedness of the People; and Men may be wicked against a Revealed and Positive, as well as against a Natural and Moral Law. I

do not say that every one who disbelieves any Gospel Doctrine, or who doth not comply with every Gospel Institution is a Wicked Man; because there is such a Thing as a Pitiabie Ignorance or Innocent Mistake. But surely all those who either carelessly neglect or wilfully contemn the Gospel, or any Part of it, are Wicked Men: And such Wickedness, no less than direct Violations of Natural Duties, calls for the Vengeance of God, who expects to be heard in whatever he commands, and will not in any Case suffer his Authority to be vilified and set at Nought. The Christian Magistrate therefore, as he tenders the Publick Civil Good, is at least so far concerned to take Care of Christianity, as to provide (as much as in him lies) that no Man lightly departs from it. But above all Things he should take Care by all proper Methods to rescue it from the Insults of the Profane and Licentious; which Impiety if he dares not suppress, shews his Authority to be in a very low and desperate Condition; or if he will not, it argues a Degree of Degeneracy in him not to be forgiven. This Right, or rather Duty, is farther enforced by this Consideration, *viz.* That the same Depravity of Mind, which leads Men to this Wickedness, has a natural Tendency to lead them to other Enormities, which have a more direct Influence upon Civil Society. He who contemns the Laws of Revealed Religion, is in a fit Disposition to break in upon the Laws of Natural Religion; for the same Authority which supports the one, supports the other. And in all Cases it will be found true, that unless the Magistrate takes Care to secure the Authority of God, he will never be able to secure his own.

By what Criterion we may oft times distinguish a wilful Contempt of the Gospel Doctrines from involuntary Ignorance, shall be considered afterwards. At present I am only stating the Point in general; and therefore think it sufficient just to mention many Things, which will be very properly enlarged upon, when we come to examine into the Particulars of the Magistrate's Authority. In general then I think it plain, from the Reason now insisted upon, that the Christian Magistrate has to do with Christianity, consider'd as he is the Guardian of the Publick Civil Good. But forasmuch (as has been shewn) the Publick Civil Good is not the sole End of the Magistrate's Office, which has also a *direct immediate* Regard to Religion; let us see, what farther Help this Consideration will afford us. To me then the Argument is clear and unexceptionable, That if the Magistrate has a Right to take Care of Natural Religion, merely because it is Religion (which is what this Way of Reasoning supposes,) it will follow, that he is concerned to take Care of any Positive Law or Institution, when in virtue of the Divine Authority injoining or commanding it, it comes to be Religion. This I say must be the Consequence, upon Supposition that it be needful, that such Divine Positive Laws or Institutions be supported and encouraged by Human Authority. Now the Reasons by which I have endeavoured to shew, that it is needful for the Magistrate to take Care of Religion under the Law of Nature, are 1st, That otherwise there would be a great Want of able and sufficient Teachers to instruct Men in the Knowledge of their Duties; and 2^{dly}, a Want also of proper and suitable Motives to engage them both to attend upon Instruction, and to act according to what they understand. Let us proceed then in the Method in which we have begun, and see whether these Reasons will not as well hold under the Christian Revelation. And,

1. As to the Argument drawn from the Necessity and Want of Teachers, this concludes more strongly with Respect to Christianity; in Proportion as the Doctrines of Morality (which are only the Dictates of Natural Reason) are more easily learned than the Doctrines of Revelation; or in Proportion as it is more difficult to discharge the Office of a Christian Teacher, than of a mere Heathen Philosopher. The Office of a Gospel Minister (as it now is and has been for many Ages backward) is to defend Christianity

stianity against the Attacks of Atheists and Infidels; to explain the Doctrines of the Gospel; to vindicate its true and genuine Sense against those false Interpretations, which have been introduced either by Design or Ignorance; and by serious and frequent Admonitions to enforce and inculcate its Precepts upon the Minds of Men. So that this appears at first Sight to be a Work full of Labour and Difficulty; a Work which requires a good Understanding, great Discretion and Diligence; a Work which we must be prepared for at first by a liberal and learned Education, and which must be carried on under a Course of Life exempted, as much as may be, from the Cares and Incumbrances of Worldly Business. Now let any one sit down and consider with himself, whether the bare Prospect of doing Good, would generally speaking (or indeed in any tolerable Measure) be a sufficient Inducement for Men at great Expence and Trouble to qualify themselves for an Employment, which debars them of all other Methods of making even a decent Provision for themselves. For my own Part, I see little Reason to expect it. For though 'tis mean and wicked for a Man to propose nothing by his entering upon the Work of the Ministry, but the getting of a Livelihood (which is to turn Religion into a Trade;) yet I hope the getting a Livelihood by and under an honest and faithful Discharge of this Office, is no unreasonable Expectation; especially since, as the Apostle tells us, *God hath ordained that they who preach the Gospel should also live of the Gospel*. When a Parent sends his Son from School to the University with an Intention to bring him up for Holy Orders, what does he propose? Why, if he has any Conscience, he proposes to make him an Instrument in the Hand of God for advancing his Honour. But if he has any Sense, he does not lay out that Money, which would have qualified him for the Exercise of some honest Calling, under a View, that having once furnished himself with a sufficient Stock of Learning and Knowledge, he may (as a Trial of his Virtue) be afterwards sent abroad to starve for his Pains. The Work of Instruction therefore can never effectually be carried on, unless a competent Provision be made for the Maintenance and Encouragement of Publick Teachers. And how shall this be secured? Why, by the Interposition of the Civil Magistrate or not at all. True indeed it is, that the Gospel itself hath thus far provided for the Maintenance of its Teachers; as to have made it the Duty of those, *who receive from them Spiritual Things, to minister unto them Carnal Things*. But this is only a general Law; and our Adversaries, I presume, are none of those who think that there is any Law of God now in Force, which determines the exact Proportion that every Congregation shall allow to its Pastor. I am rather apt to fancy that so zealous Defenders of Civil Right and Property, will be as tender of Men's Purses, as they pretend to be of their Consciences; and as they have granted them full Licence to believe what they please, will also give them Leave to pay what they please: Upon which Foot the Teacher's Allowance will be either sufficient or not sufficient, just as his Hearers are liberally or not liberally disposed, or according as they like or dislike his Doctrines; which many times, by how much the better they are, by so much the worse they will be received. Besides, if there were any Divine Law which determined the exact Proportion of every Teacher's Allowance, this would make (I fear) but small Alteration in the Case, unless the Church had a Power to enforce this Law by Temporal Penalties. For what if the People should refuse to do what the Gospel commands? Must the Minister be left to feed upon the Air without Remedy, till he can preach them into a Sense of their Duty? Why yes; For the Church is supposed to have no Power to inflict Temporal Penalties, and 'tis certain that she has none. So that if the Magistrate in virtue of his Office inflicts none neither; it will be a Law without a Penalty, and be used as such Laws are always used, *i. e.* observed or not observed, according to Discretion.

AND where would be the Harm, perhaps you'll say, if Ministers were left to depend for their Maintenance upon the Discretion of their Hearers? Was not this in Fact the Case for the first 300 Years? Yes; and the first Preachers of the Gospel, we know, *laboured with their Hands*; but has this ever been thought a fit Example for after Ages to follow? The Point is not what was once sufficient upon a particular extraordinary Occasion; but what is and will be necessary, ordinarily and in the general Course of the World. The first Believers *had all Things in common*, for we read, that *as many as were Possessors of Lands or Houses sold them, and brought the Prices of them, and laid them at the Apostles Feet*: which is just as good an Argument against Civil Property among Christians, as the other is against a standing and settled Maintenance for Pastors. But this continued but for a little Time, and whilst the Number of Christians was comparatively but small: Yet still there remained a great Spirit of Zeal and Devotion, both in the Teachers and in the Hearers; by which it came to pass, that the one were less desirous to receive, whilst at the same Time, the other were more ready to give. But in Proportion as the Heat of Men's Zeal began to abate, (which in all Religions is always greatest at its first springing up) there were larger Demands on the one Hand, and less Supplies on the other: which was the Reason that when Christianity became the Religion of the Empire, and the Multitude of Believers incomparably greater, the first Christian Emperors found it immediately necessary to supply the Defect of voluntary Oblations by legal Provisions. In short, Whatever was then wanting to the Church of External Supports, was abundantly made up by the Internal Gifts and Graces of God's Spirit, as I shall have Occasion to observe more fully by and by. In the mean while, I think I may trust the Point in general with any Man of common Observation: Let him only cast his Eyes about him and consider, how Mankind is now for the most part disposed. That which he will take Notice of, I conceive, is this; That if any Thing considerable is advanced in the Way of voluntary Contribution, it is amongst those whom Faction hath spirited up against an Establishment; or in Popish Countries, where People are gull'd out of their Money by the Pious Frauds of Priests, Indulgencies, Relicks, Pilgrimages, Stories of Purgatory, and I know not what. But how stands the Case among Protestants in this Respect, and particularly among our selves? Has their having received the true Faith enlarged their Bowels towards those through whose Ministry they have received it? Are they so much the more Liberal, by how much they are the more Sound? Or rather, have they not almost lost their Zeal along with their Superstition? How some may have found it I cannot say; But, I believe, except it be here and there in rich and populous Places, few feel the Benefit of any Thing more than what the Law allows them; and even this is very frequently not to be obtained without much Difficulty. This shews how hopeful a Condition the Clergy would be in, if they had no better Security to rely upon than the mere Courtesy of their Parishioners: And doubtless it was from this Knowledge of Mankind, that all Christian Magistrates in the World, have thought it requisite to take them under their Protection; and to ascertain that by Law, which without Law they would have been obliged to have asked, and, what is worse, might have asked in vain.

'Tis easy then to see, what would be the Consequence if this Method were laid aside; to wit, That instead of a sufficient Number of able and learned Men to vindicate, explain, and inculcate God's Word; there would in Process of Time be a great Scarcity of Teachers; and that these few would generally be of the meaner and more ignorant Sort: Men whose Circumstances, and Want of Education would afford them no better Prospect than the scanty Allowance of a Congregation. And as the Age grew more degenerate, the Evil would increase; so that in Proportion as the Church would want a better Supply of this Sort, it would in Fact be supplied much worse: the Consequence

quence of which in Time must be an universal Ignorance and Depravity of Manners. We may write and preach to the End of our Days, but Men will still be Men: And so long as they are so, it will always be found true, that where there is no Encouragement given to Learning, Ignorance will follow; and that a poor Benefice and a mean Pastor commonly go together. I have been informed that the Bishops in *Wales* out of mere Necessity are obliged to confer Holy Orders upon many, who, besides their Sobriety, have little else to recommend them than a good Knowledge of their Mother Tongue. Now were the Cause universal, the Effect would be so too: And what a notable Bulwark against Popery the Church of *England* would be, I leave every serious Person to consider.

BUT what is all this to us, say our Adversaries, who do not (f) *argue against the Maintenance and Support of those who officiate in the Churches or Assemblies of Christians?* With all my Heart: Truth is so rare a Thing amongst them, that I shall always be glad to accept of it wheresoever I find it, even upon their own Terms. And therefore if they will speak out and tell us plainly, not only that the Preachers of Christianity have a Right to be maintained, but also that the Christian Magistrate hath a Right to ascertain that Maintenance; I am very free to discharge them of the Consequence. But then they will excuse me, I hope, if from this Point thus allowed I endeavour to shew them the Falshood of their Principles. If the Magistrate has a Right to support the Preachers of Christianity; he must have a Right to support Christianity it self: For a Right to the Means, always implies a Right to the End. But if what they say on the other Side be true, that the Magistrate hath nothing to do with Religion; 'tis certain that he can have nothing to do with the Christian Religion: The Consequence of which is, that his appointing a Maintenance for a Christian Teacher in every Parish, is as great a Breach of his Trust, as would be his settling a Stipend for the Maintenance of a Musick or a Dancing-Master. This is so clear a Case, that one would think it were next to impossible that any one should mistake it: And therefore I cannot help vehemently suspecting, that by this *not arguing against the Maintenance and Support of those who officiate in the Churches or Assemblies of Christians*; a great deal less is intended than what his Lordship perhaps would be willing enough to have understood. By the *Churches or Assemblies* of Christians may be meant *Churches or Conventicles*, i. e. the Assemblies of all those who go under the general Denomination of Christians, whether they preach the Gospel or their own Inventions. And it is not said of any particular Sort of Teachers, that the Magistrate has a Right to appoint them a Maintenance; but of all in general that they *should be* maintained, which (for ought appears) leaves them all alike to the Courtesy of their respective Congregations. Indeed I can see no great Reason why HE should be at all solicitous about a Maintenance for Teachers, who thinks (g) *Learning* to be so needless and useless a Thing towards leading Men to a right Judgment in Points of Religion; as that, *one honest illiterate Man* shall be able to do as much as *all the learned Men of a Nation met together in a general Council*. If this I say be right, the Teachers of Christianity have little to do; and the Magistrate may much better employ the Publick Stock, than by appointing them a Subsistence. Let the Cocker go forth from his Hovel, and the Butcher from his Stall, and exercise their Gifts before any Congregation that will be willing to admit of them. As they like, so let them pay, and the less the better: For I am truly of Opinion that the very least they can give will be too good a Reward for such Qualifications. But to proceed,

(f) Letter to Dr. Snape. p. 44.

(g) Answ. to the Representation. p. 98.

2. To the other Argument, which is drawn from the Want of seasonable and proper Motives to engage Men to attend upon Instruction, and to act according to what they understand; which holds also with Respect to Christianity though in a lower Degree. The Gospel, as I said before, gives us a more firm Assurance of the Rewards of a Life to come, than the Law of Nature doth: It also furnishes us with more and greater internal Helps, than the Law of Nature can. But in plain Terms hath it not left us still Men, *i. e.* subject to those carnal Lusts and Appetites, which war against Reason, and are apt to lead us to a Behaviour unworthy of our selves? If it has; human Methods are still necessary: Nor should we be so unmindful of our own Weakness, as to neglect the Use of Worldly Motives on the one Hand; so long as there are Worldly Motives to encounter on the other. Nor is this any Diminution of the Excellency of the Gospel; how forward soever some may have been to represent it as such. For Religion is not therefore the less excellent, because the Corruption and Depravity of Mankind is greater. Christianity has enough in it to recommend it to the Choice of all reasonable Men; even though all the Powers of the Earth should rise up against it: For the Rewards which it proposeth in a Life to come, being infinitely preferable to all the Advantages we can reap in this; it must therefore be a Thing infinitely more reasonable to renounce the latter for the Sake of the former, than the former for the Sake of the latter. But yet if in this degenerate State of the World, Mankind are disposed to act unreasonably, and the Prevalency of their fleshly Appetites shall at any Time take them off from being duly affected with the Disproportion that there is between Earthly Things and Heavenly; evident it is that these Motives must then loose their Effect: For that which influences Men's Actions is not the real intrinsic Value of Things, but the Place which they have in the Esteem and Opinion of those who apply themselves to judge of, and consider them. 'Tis therefore, I say, no Diminution to Christianity, that the Motives of this World are necessary to give Weight to its Precepts. For this Necessity arises not from hence, that its own Motives are not of themselves sufficient if they be rated according to their true Value: But the Case is, that Mankind, through their great Proneness to sensual Things, being apt to undervalue them, it is therefore needful to make Use of other Motives, which, though infinitely less in themselves, are yet more adapted to their present corrupted State and Condition.

BUT here again I expect to be told of the *flourishing Estate* of the Christian Church during the first 300 Years; not only without, but in Opposition to those Worldly Motives, the Needfulness of which is now insisted upon: Nor am I in the least afraid of the Objection, which, let our Adversaries make the most of they are able, will yield them nothing. For what do they mean by the *flourishing Estate* of Christianity? Flourishing indeed it was, if you consider only the Purity of the Faith then professed, and the Piety and Constancy of its Professors. But he that shall say that had the Rulers of this World immediately bowed down their Necks to the Son of God, and the Motives of this World been added to the Motives of another; that is, that if all those Impediments had from the very first been removed, which alone hinder'd the Progress of the Gospel, the Number of Good Christians would not have been incomparably greater, and so Christianity have in this Sense (which is the Sense to be regarded in this Question) flourished more within that Period of Time than it did; He I say who shall pretend to this, deserves rather to be pitied than refuted. But it pleased God, for wise Reasons of Providence, that his Church should be founded in Sufferings, and the Faith of his Son arise out of small Beginnings. Small I say, for very small was the Number of good Christians, though not comparatively to the Body of Professors, yet comparatively to the Number of those to whom the Preaching of the Gospel came. And it ought to be remarked that even to the gathering together this small Number; even

to this flourishing State of the Church, many Circumstances concurr'd which are not common to these latter Ages. The Miracles which were wrought by the Power, and in the Name of Jesus, were either before their Eyes, or within the Memory of those who had been Eye Witnesses of them. At least the Fame of them had passed through so few Hands, that there was no Room for those Cavils, which in Cases of this Sort, Length of Time naturally makes Way for: And there was moreover a most plentiful Communication of the Divine Spirit, through which with more than a Human Power, the Faith of Christ triumphed over the World and all its Temptations. In a Word; there are visible Marks of an extraordinary Interposition of the Almighty Hand of God to support his Infant Church: And though I doubt not but the same Power would again interpose in the same Manner, if there should be the same Occasion; yet since there is no such Occasion (*Kings* being now become our *nursing Fathers*, and *Queens* our *nursing Mothers*;) As we have no Reason to think that God does now vouchsafe the same Assistance; so 'tis little better than tempting him, to quarrel at those Methods of his Providence, by which, in an ordinary Way, he is pleas'd to minister to our Infirmities. Besides; If this Objection proves any Thing, it is, that Christianity flourishes best under Persecution; for this was the Case for the greater Part of the first 300 Years. May we not then as well argue from hence, that in order to advance Christianity it were a good Way to bring in Persecution? But of the Falshood of this, *Mahometism* has afforded us a sad and lamentable Instance, which by the Power of the Sword hath even extinguish'd Christianity in those Parts where once it shone in its brightest Glory. And if the same Method had every where been used, the same Effect (without the miraculous Interposition of Providence) would every where have followed. So vain a Thing is it for Men to argue from particular extraordinary Cases what is proper in the general Course of the World!

THUS I have gone through those several Reasons, by which it has been shewn, that the Care of Religion belongs to the Civil Magistrate under the Law of Nature; and you see plainly that, in a greater or lesser Degree, they all of them hold with Respect to Christianity. Now to all that has been offered upon this Subject, it will serve (as I said before) as a good collateral Evidence to consider, in what Manner God was heretofore pleas'd to deal with his People the *Jews*. It is a very strong Presumption concerning Religion in general, that it is the proper Object of the Magistrate's Care, that in the only Commonwealth which was of God's own immediate Appointment, the Care of Religion was committed to the Magistrate: And the Law of *Moses* being a divine Revelation, as well as the Law of *Jesus Christ*; this shews that Religion is not therefore an improper Object of the Magistrate's Concern because it is revealed. But if any should say that there is something peculiar in each Revelation, which makes the Interposition of the Magistrate fitting as to the one, but not so as to the other: it will be proper that they tell us also what that is: And the most that I have ever heard of the Matter amounts to this, *viz.* That the Law of *Moses* was a Law not of Religion only, but of Civil Government also, and that the Security of the *Jewish* Nation consider'd as a Body Politick, was made to depend entirely upon the Observance of it; which is true. But the Observation I think advances nothing. For this is the very Question that I would ask, *viz.* How it came to pass that under the *Jewish* Dispensation, the Law of Religion and Civil Government should be both one; and that under the Gospel, Religion and Civil Government should have nothing to do the one with the other. The End both of the Law and of the Gospel was ultimately the same, to wit, the leading Men to the Worship of the true God. As a Motive to this the one proposes a Temporal, the other an Eternal Inheritance. Now from this Diversity of the Motive under each Dispensation this Difference indeed must necessarily arise; that there is no far-

ther Need of the Promise of an Earthly *Canaan*, the Heavenly being so fully and so clearly revealed. But pray let us consider this one Point: Was the proposing the Land of *Canaan* as the Reward of their Obedience, the only Method which God made Use of to keep the *Jews* stedfast in their Duty? 'Tis granted it was not. For he brought them under the constant Restraint of the Civil Magistrate, and by this Means so link'd their Obedience even with their present Good, that there could be no such Thing as departing from the one, without forfeiting the other. And what was the Reason of this Procedure? Why plainly this, because they were always prone to rebel. The Promise was at a Distance, and so proper to influence them consider'd only as reasonable Creatures. Lust and Passion in the mean while were importunate, and a present Disease call'd for a present Remedy. And is then this New Dispensation, a Dispensation of less Wisdom and Mercy than the Old? Hath God set before us a Heavenly *Canaan* suited only to the Nature of Angels, and at a much greater Distance from us than the Land of Promise was from the *Jews*; and hath he made no Provision for our present Needs, considered as we are Flesh and Blood? The Gospel indeed as it hath also brought in a better Hope, so it hath also brought in a better Nature: But as I said before, it leaves us still Men, and it is plain that we want to be dealt with as such. Let us not then think so unworthily of the All-wise Governour of the World, as to suppose that in a Matter of so much Consequence as that of our everlasting Interest, he makes Use of Means disproportionate to the End; nor impute that Weakness to him which we should blame in an earthly Parent, who, in order to make the Child whom he loves dutiful and obedient, should think it enough to give him the Promise of an Estate in Reversion, leaving him all the while exposed to the Follies and Extravagancies of Youth, and taking no Care to guard him against those Temptations, which, by leading him into evil Courses, will cause him to fall short of his Inheritance.

BUT if this be the Case, you will ask, How happens it that the Gospel has no where given any express Directions to Christian Magistrates, to make Use of their Authority towards the Support of its Precepts? To which I answer in general that there was no Occasion for it. The Gospel has introduced nothing New in this particular; and therefore there was no Necessity of any New Injunctions to be added to the Old. 'Tis true the Gospel is in many Cases no less express and particular in enforcing Old Laws than in prescribing New: For of this Sort are all the Laws of Morality, the Rules or Directions concerning which do nevertheless make up one very considerable Part of the Sacred Writings. So that if you should still think fit to urge, Why amongst all these Directions there are none to the Magistrate, to employ his Authority in the Defence of Christianity; it may not be altogether improper to observe, that the Right of the Magistrate to take Care of Religion, was a Point generally well understood; and that the Design of the Gospel was not to give a compleat System of Morality (which was not wanting;) but to enliven those Parts of the Universal Law of Nature, the Traces of which were almost worn out; and to enforce those Duties in the Practice whereof Mankind were observed to be most defective. 'Tis upon this Account that the Duties of Sobriety and Purity are every where very earnestly insisted upon, whilst others are only just touch'd accidentally as it were, and upon Occasion. For here it was that Lust and Passion had made the greatest Havock both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*: Here also the strongest Fence was necessary with Respect to the Christians of those Times, and of the Ages to come: The Pleasures of Intemperance and Sensuality, being those which Men are carried to with the quickest Appetite, from which good Men are preserved always with some Difficulty, and bad Men recall'd with infinitely more. But in the Exercise of Power and Dominion there is something which gratifies the Passions; and though there is Room enough for Neglect in Magistrates, they have certainly a great deal less
Need

Need to be put in Mind of their Duty in those Points in which their Authority is concerned, than in others, where the Obligation is common both to their Subjects and to themselves.

THIS, I humbly conceive, is no useless Observation: But the Principal Reason why Magistrates are no where in the Gospel expressly and particularly enjoined to concern themselves with Religion, seems to be this, That when the Gospel was first promulged there were no Christian Magistrates; nor were there, in the Order of Providence, to be any such for some Hundreds of Years after. To have exhorted the Jewish or the Heathen Magistrates to encourage Christianity, when as yet they were not Christians themselves, had been absurd: To have exhorted them to encourage their own Religion in Opposition to Christianity had been yet more so. What Room was there then for the giving of a Law, when there were none in Being by which that Law could be put in Execution? But the Law, you will say, might have been made *de futuro*; i. e. the Gospel might have expressly and particularly enjoined, that when the Magistrates of any Nation should become Christians, they should make Use of their Authority to support and encourage Christianity. It might so without Doubt; but there are two Reasons to be given why it was not to be expected: The one is that it was not at all natural, and the other that upon some Accounts neither was it proper. As to the first, be pleased to consider the Nature of those Writings, which make up the Sacred Volume of the New Testament; Part whereof are Historical, and contain the most remarkable Passages of the Life and Conversation of Christ and his Apostles; and Part Monitory, consisting of Epistles occasionally written to particular Churches or particular Persons. Now what Wonder is it that in the whole Narrative of the Four Evangelists and of the Acts of the Apostles, we meet with no Directions given to Magistrates, when neither Christ nor his Apostles had any Conversation with such? The short Period of our Blessed Saviour's Ministry was employ'd not among the great and mighty Men of this World, who he knew were in no Condition to receive his Doctrine; but among the poor and the humble, to whom it would have been to little Purpose to have discoursed concerning the Right and Authority of Princes. The Case was the same as to the Apostles: They were Subjects themselves, and had to do only with those of the same Rank and Quality; who therefore were to be instructed not how to rule, but how to obey. Rather there was more Need to tell them how to become good Christians than good Subjects; for in this latter Point the first Converts were not wont to be defective. And hence doubtless it is that the Duty even of Subjects is in the New Testament so sparingly insisted upon, and that the Office of the Magistrate is but once or twice (*b*) pointed at, and that occasionally, as it contained the Reason and Foundation of the other. The first, I say, comparatively or with Respect to other Matters in which Christians were more prone to offend, was little wanting; and the last (in the Way of direct Precept) would have been unnatural. For to whom should these Directions about the Magistrate's Office have been given? Not to the People whom they did not concern: Not to the Magistrate himself who as yet was no Christian, nor ever like to be so. Give me Leave now to make good what I observed also before, that the giving Laws *de futuro* concerning what the Magistrate should do, in Case he became a Christian, would have been improper as well as unnatural. For it was intended by Providence (for wise and good Reasons without Question) that the Infant Church of Christ should be under the Discouragement of the Civil Magistrate, and suffer Persecution. This is what our Saviour was very careful to inculcate upon the Minds of his Followers. He told them that they must *be brought before Kings and Rulers for his Name's sake*;

(*b*) Rom. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 13.

and seems industriously to have avoided saying any Thing, which might lead them to expect any good Fruit from being his Disciples, but what was reserved for them in his own, *i. e.* in the Heavenly Kingdom, that they might not be unprepared for those Tryals whereunto he had appointed them. To have told them therefore, that the Magistrate should hereafter become Christian, and encourage his Doctrines by the Exercise of Civil Authority; what else would it have been, but to have raised in them those Hopes, which (as it now appears) he had no Mind they should entertain? And where could be the Propriety of giving Rules to them concerning the State of a Case, which was not to happen in their Days, nor in the Days of many Generations to come? Had it been the Business of Christ and his Apostles to have given an exact and particular Account of the State of the Church in future Times; we might then have expected to have found as plain Directions in what Sort Christian Magistrates were to behave themselves. But of this there is every where a profound Silence: And so far was our Lord from encouraging any Inquiries of this Sort that when his Disciples after his Resurrection (still leaning to the Hopes of Worldly Prosperity and Grandeur) ask'd him, *Lord, wilt thou at this Time restore again the Kingdom to Israel*; he check'd their Forwardness with this Rebuke, *it is not for you to know the Times or the Seasons which the Father hath put in his own Power.* Act. 1. 6, 7.

To conclude all; the Writings of the New Testament were never intended to be a compleat and exact System either of Religion or Civil Polity. They are Books adapted to a Particular Time and Particular Occasions; and it sufficiently answers the End of their Composition, if they furnish us with general Rules proper to direct the Faith, and regulate the Behaviour of Christians. And if a general Rule will satisfy in this Case; permit me to say, that the Apostles St. Paul and St. Peter, (if you are willing to hear them) have given us a very plain one in the Places just now referr'd to; where we are told by the former, that the Magistrate *is the Minister of God for Good* on the one Hand, and *a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil* on the other: And by the latter (exactly to the same Sense) that he is appointed *for the Punishment of Evil Doers, and for the Praise, (i. e. the Reward) of them that do well.* I know well enough our Aversaries will reply, that the Good and Evil here spoken of must be understood not in a Religious but in a Civil Sense. But this is purely arbitrary. The Text, it is plain, makes no such Distinction; and as to the Reason of the Thing, it lies (as I hope I have sufficiently shewn) full against it. But how hard soever it may be to resolve how it came to pass, that the Scriptures should have given no particular Direction to Christian Magistrates to take Care of Christianity, supposing it to be the Will of God that they should take Care of it; One Thing I am sure there is much harder, which it concerns not us, but those who oppose us seriously to consider; and that is, How it happened, (supposing what they say to be true, that Christian Magistrates have nothing to do with Christianity,) that they were not expressly forbidden to concern themselves with it. This I say is a much harder Question to be resolved than the other. For in our Way of reckoning, the Gospel has introduced nothing new as to this Particular; and therefore, as we said before, there was no Need of any new Injunctions. But in their Way, the Office of the Magistrate now under the Gospel, differs from what it was at least apprehended to be under the Law of Nature; and from what it most certainly was under the Law of Moses. There never was yet any Government in the World, so far as the Records of past Ages will carry us, in which the Care of Religion was not esteemed to be a principal Branch of the Magistrate's Office. Now this Notion was either right or it was wrong. If you say it was right; You say what we say, who thence conclude that it is so still, because the Gospel has made no Difference. If you say it was wrong; the Mistake was certainly of too great Consequence not to have been taken Notice of when the Gospel was promulged;

mulged; especially considering that God himself had given the greatest Countenance possible to this Mistake (as it is now supposed to be) by committing the Care of the Jewish Religion to the Jewish Magistrate. Is there any Thing then in the Writings of the New Testament which tends to shew us, that the Magistrate has nothing to do with Religion? Not a Syllable; Though 'tis obvious to take Notice, that the Apostles (to say nothing of our Saviour himself) if they had believed any such Thing, had the properest Occasions in the World to have said so. When according to their Master's Prediction they were *brought before Rulers and Kings for the Sake of his Gospel*, it had been impertinent to have told them (which yet our Adversaries seem to think, if our Principles be true, they ought to have told them) that they acknowledged their Authority, and expected they should make Use of it not against, but for Christianity, when they themselves should become Christians. But if what they say be true, and the Apostles had denied their Authority, nothing could have been so proper as to have pleaded *coram non Judice*; which yet we do not find that they ever did. No; the Authority was always submitted to; and the Defence put upon the Righteousness of the Cause; and the Necessity they were under of *obeying God rather than Man*. Look but to the latter End of the Acts of the Apostles, and you will find an Instance home to the Purpose. At Chap. 23. we read of St. Paul's being brought before Felix the Roman Governour. His Indictment as laid by Tertullus (Chap. 24. Verses 5, 6.) was this, That he was a *pestilent Fellow; a Mover of Sedition among the Jews; a Ringleader of the Sect of the Nazarenes, and a Profaner of the Temple*. The Crimes objected, you see, were partly of a Civil and partly of a Religious Nature: And how does the Apostle defend himself? Why, the Charge of *Sedition* he utterly denies, and puts it upon his Adversaries to prove, (Verses 12, 13, 18, 19, 20.) The Charge of his being a Christian, and preaching the Doctrine of the *Resurrection*, he confesses, and shews the Reasons of his being so. (Verses 14, 15, 21.) His Conduct before Festus the Successor of Felix (an Account of which we have in the two following Chapters) was exactly the same. Here the Jews are urgent on the one Hand in renewing their Accusations and demanding Judgment, (Chap. 25. Verses 2, 3, 7, 15.) St. Paul on the other Hand asserts his own Innocency, declaring that *neither against the Law of the Jews, nor against the Temple, nor yet against Cæsar he had offended any Thing at all*, (Verse 8.) That is, he was a Transgressor neither against the Laws of Religion, nor yet against the Laws of the State; for this is to the very same Sense of what he speaks, Chap. 24. Verse 16. *Herein do I exercise my self to have always a Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Men*. Finally, when it was moved to him by the Governour, whether he would go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged before him of these Matters; not being willing (as indeed he had little Reason) to trust himself to the Mercy of the Jews, he rejects the Proposal and *appeals unto Cæsar*, Vers. 9, 10, 11.

WHAT follows in the next Chapter is a Relation of another Hearing, which St. Paul had before Festus in Conjunction with Agrippa; where the Apostle, having in the first Place suggested the true Cause of his Prosecution to be (as indeed it was) his *preaching Jesus and the Resurrection*, proceeds at large to vindicate his Proceeding, by giving them the History of his miraculous Conversion. So that the whole being thus laid together, let any reasonable Man consider with himself, whether this be any Thing like the Behaviour of one who disallowed of the Magistrate's Authority in Matters of Religion? A Court of Judicature is not a proper Place for making Converts: And though it may very well be admitted as one Reason, why God permitted these Holy Men to be haled before the Judgment Seat of Unbelievers, that they might have an Opportunity of bearing Testimony to his Son Jesus; Yet it must appear to any attentive Reader from the whole Scope of the Apostle's Defence, that what he directly and immediately proposed by it, was the justifying himself against his

Accusers; by shewing, with Respect to some Points, that he was not guilty of the Facts laid to his Charge; and with Respect to others, that what he did was nothing more than what ought to be done. But why, I pray, so carefull to justify himself, unless because he knew that his Judges had a *Right* to require a Reason of his Behaviour? Surely, had he thought otherwise, it had been natural for him to have taken the shorter and more obvious Method, and instead of using many Arguments and appealing at last to *Cæsar's Judgment Seat*; to have told them plainly, that forasmuch as his Accusers were unable to make good that Part of the Charge which related to Sedition, he had Reason to hope the Case would be determined in his Favour; because as to that other Part of it which concerned Religion, neither they nor *Cæsar* had any Thing to do with it. Or if he thought it a just Tribute to his Master's Honour to *give a Reason of the Hope that was in him*; yet it can hardly be supposed that he should wholly have omitted that other no less warrantable Plea. For why, I beseech you, was it not to be insisted upon? Not because in general it was not necessary: For Magistrates were to be told of their Duties as well as private Persons: And if they took too much upon them in taking Cognizance of Religious Matters, the Mistake (as I said before) was of too much Consequence to Mankind to be suffered to pass without any Censure. But under the present Circumstances perhaps it was not so prudent. Why not? Could you wish for a more proper Occasion? The Plea 'tis likely might have been somewhat Dangerous: But what? Could he be afraid of Danger who had so lately been strengthened by a Heavenly Vision: *Be of good cheer Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear Witness also of me at Rome (i)*? And once before by another upon a like Occasion, *Be not afraid but speak, and hold not thy Peace: For I am with thee, and no Man shall set on thee to hurt thee (k)*? Can you suspect him of Want of Courage who in this very Contest, when the *High Priest* commanded him to be *smitten contrary to the Law*, gave so evident a Proof of his Intrepidity in that brisk Reply, *God shall smite thee, thou whited Wall (l)*? Or finally, if all this can be supposed; is it yet to be imagined that he should not upon any Occasion, nor to any Person, let drop the smallest Token of his Dislike to so foul an Abuse of the Magistrate's Authority? The plain Truth is, that *St. Paul* was an utter Stranger to this new-fangled Doctrine, of which his own express Words are yet a farther, and, in my Judgment, an incontestable Evidence. *I stand at Cæsar's Judgment Seat ἔμει δὲ κρίνεται, where I OUGHT to be judged.* What can be said to this? Why, I think, I see the utmost; which is, that these Words relate to that Part of the Case only, which was of a Civil Nature. But why will you thus arbitrarily impose a Limitation upon the Apostle's Words, which the Context will not justify, nor indeed fairly admit of? His Plea is this, *Neither against the Law of the Jews, nor against the Temple, nor against Cæsar, have I offended any Thing, i. e.* (as has afore been noted) I have transgressed neither the Laws of Religion, nor the Laws of the State. Upon this *Festus* moves; *Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these Things?* Of what Things? Why of all those Things which were the subject Matter of his Accusation. Now these are the Things concerning which the Apostle says in his Reply, That he *ought to be judged at Cæsar's Judgment Seat*; which therefore amounts to a very plain Confession, that Matters both of a Civil and a Religious Nature, are the proper Subject of the Magistrate's Cognizance.

WHAT has been observed concerning the Behaviour of the Apostles, is also true of the Primitive Martyrs, as it were easy to shew by an Induction of Particulars, did I think it needful. But the Thing is notorious: And what are all the ancient Apologies? Are they Exceptions against the Jurisdiction of the

(i) Chap. 23. Vers. 11.

(k) Chap. 18. Vers. 9, 10.

(l) Chap. 23. Vers. 3.

Court; or Appeals to the common Sense and Reason of Mankind, for the Justice and Righteousness of the Christian Cause? Much do we hear on all Hands of the Iniquity, Partiality, and Cruelty of the *Roman* Powers; but not a single Word that insinuates, that in taking the Affairs of Religion under their Cognizance, they medled with Matters which did not concern them. But how just soever the Cause of Christianity was in it self; it certainly contradicted the Laws then in Being. *Tertullian* (m) owns the Charge; and how does he go about to remove it? By telling them that they had nothing to do to make Laws about Religion? No; He answers (as a wise Man ought to answer) that their Laws were bad and ought to be mended. *When* (says he) *you rigidly insist upon this, that Christianity is against Law, and prescribe against dispensing one jot with the Letter upon any Consideration of Equity, this is declaring your selves Arbitrary; and you play the Tyrant if you will a Thing to be unlawful, because you will, and not because it is so. But if your Will is regulated by the Measures of Good and Evil, and you forbid a Thing because it ought to be forbidden; then certainly by this Rule of right Reason you cannot licence Evil, nor forbid the Obligations of doing Good. If your Law prohibits what is good, such a Prohibition I conclude to be invalid: But if it forbids what is evil, I dispute not my Obedience. Nor think it strange if your Laws are sometimes in the wrong, since they are but the Composures of Men, and not the Commands of God.* One Passage indeed there is in this *Apology*, which our Adversaries perhaps will be apt to catch at as favourable to their Opinion; and which therefore ought to be taken Notice of. It is to be met with *Chap. 24.* where, speaking to the *Roman* Magistrate, he saith, (n) *See to it whether this does not concur to the making up of another Article of Irreligion against you; namely, the taking away Liberty in Religion, and interdicting Men the Option of their Deity, so that they must not worship the God they would, but are forced to worship the God they would not. Forced Service is of no Esteem even in the Eyes of Men, and therefore even the Egyptians are tolerated in their vain Superstition. They are permitted to make Gods of Birds and Beasts, and to make it Capital to kill any of this Sort of Deities. Every Province and City also has its proper Gods.*——We alone are denied the Privilege of having a Religion peculiar to our selves: We offend the Romans and are not to be look'd upon as Romans, because we do not worship the God of the Romans. Thus the Apologist; whose Words if I suppose them to import, that it is a wicked Thing in the Magistrate (in Matters purely of a Religious Nature) to punish a Man for acting agreeable to his own Opinion and Liking, I shall be thought, I presume, to have allowed to my Adversaries all that they can desire. Now 1st, Give me Leave to observe that, even this being admitted, the Passage comes far short of the general Point, that the Magistrate has nothing to do with Religion. For it may consistently be said that the Magistrate has to do with Religion, and yet that he hath no Right to punish a Man for following his own Opinion in Matters of Religion; because, as has been shewn, there are divers Ways, besides that of punishing Offenders, by which the Interest of Religion may be promoted; and consequently divers Ways besides this, by the Pursuit of which the Magistrate may concern himself with Religion. The Magistrate has to do with Religion, if he hath a Right by any Means to promote and en-

(m) Cum durè definitis dicendo, non licet esse vos, & hoc sine ullo Retractatu humaniore præscribitis, Vim proferimini. & iniquam exercetis Dominationem, si idè negatis licere quia vultis, non quia debuit non licere. Quod si quia non debet, idè non vultis licere, sine dubio id non debet licere, quod malè fit, & utique hoc ipso præjudicatur licere quod benè fit. Si bonum invenero esse, quod Lex tua prohibuit, nonne ex illo præjudicio prohibere me non potest, quod, si malum esset, jure prohiberet? Si Lex tua erravit, puto ab Homine concepta est, neque enim de Cælo ruit. *Apol. Cap. 4.*

(n) Videte ne & hoc ad Irreligiositatis Elogium concurrat, adimere Libertatem Religionis, & interdicere Optionem Divinitatis, ut non liceat mihi colere quem velim sed cogar colere quem nolim. Nemo se ab invito coli vellet, ne Homo quidem; atque adèd & *Ægyptiis* permissa est tam vanæ Superstitionis Potestas *Avibus & Bestiis* consecrandis & Capite damnandis qui aliquem hujusmodi Deum occiderit. Unicuique etiam Provincie & Civitati suus Deus est.——Nos soli arcemur a Religionis Proprietate. Lædimus Romanos, nec Romani habemur, quia non Romanorum Deum colimus. *Ibid. Cap. 24.*

courage it; and this Right is not denied by saying that he hath no Right to punish, unless this were the only Means by which Religion may be encouraged. But, 2. If we will be so just as to allow *Tertullian* to be his own best Interpreter, this cannot possibly be his Meaning: For hear what he says a little before in this very Apology: (o) *We have laid aside the Worship of your Gods, from the Time that we knew them to be no Gods. That therefore which you may demand of us is, that we prove them not to be Gods, and therefore not to be worshipped: For if they are indeed Gods, Divine Honour is certainly their due; and the Christians will DESERVE PUNISHMENT, if it appears that they have refused to worship those who are Gods under a Notion that they are not Gods.* See you not here how the Apologist joins Issue upon the Merits of the Cause, and declares that the Heathen Magistrates had a Right to demand of the Christians to prove their Gods to be no Gods, which if they were not able to do, their Conduct would then deserve Correction? An arrant Absurdity surely, if it be true that the Magistrate has nothing to do with Religion! But what then, you'll ask, becomes of the Argument, that the Christians ought not to be forced to worship the Heathen Deities, because a forced Worship is no Worship? Why the Passages, I think, may easily be reconciled, by saying, that mere Punishment does not imply Force, or at least not that Force which the Apologist complains of. The Force which *Tertullian* condemns as destructive of the Liberty of Religion, is the dragging Men by the Head and Ears, and compelling them by cruel Tortures, either to sacrifice, or to pay some other external Mark of Divine Honour to the Heathen Deities against their Wills. This we know was the Way; and that the Apologist had this in his View, is plain from *Chap. 28.* where he repeats the same Argument, and refers back to the very Passage under Consideration. (p) *It seems manifestly wrong, says he, to force Men to SACRIFICE against the natural Freedom of their Wills, since, as I have elsewhere declared, Religion must be the Effect of a willing Mind. It must needs be very foolish to press Men to the Service of the Gods, whom for their own Sakes they ought to serve freely.* A foolish and wicked Thing it is without Doubt, whether the Worship Men are compelled to be right, or whether it be wrong. But since this is not essential to the Notion of Punishment, the Apologist, whilst he condemned the one, might (where the Goodness of the Cause would justify it) very consistently plead for the other. It may be said farther, that by the Phrase *Deos vestros colere desinimus*, *Tertullian* meant something more than the Words do properly and literally express; i. e. not merely a ceasing or forbearing to worship the *Roman* Gods, but the teaching every where that they were Abominations, and that it was impious and wicked to honour them as Gods. This was the Case of the first Preachers of the Gospel; and for this it was that they were so roughly treated by the Civil Powers. Not to worship the *Roman* Gods was a Thing in which the Christians were not singular: For as *Tertullian* here observes, every Country under the *Roman* Jurisdiction had its peculiar Deities, in the Worship of which they were suffer'd without any Molestation, because they molested none in the Worship of theirs. But the Christian Preachers were to root Idolatry out of the World, which the Heathen Magistrates could by no Means endure; nor ought they (may our Apologist very consistently be supposed to say) to have endured it, if under the Notion of destroying Idolatry, they had opposed the Worship of real Deities. For whether it be Truth or not, 'tis Sense at least, to maintain, that every one ought to have the Liberty of chusing what God he has a Mind to, without being forced into a Worship he does not approve; yea,

(o) *Deos vestros colere desinimus, ex quo illos non esse cognoscimus. Hoc igitur exigere debetis uti probemus non esse illos Deos, & idcirco non colendos; quia tunc demum coli debuissent si Dii fuissent. Tunc & Christiani puniendi, si quos non colerent, quia putarent non esse, constaret illos Deos esse. Ibid. Cap. 10.*

(p) Facile iniquum videtur liberos Homines invitos urgeri ad Sacrificandum; nam & alias divinæ rei faciundæ libens animus indicitur. Certè ineptum existimaretur, si quis ab alio cogeretur ad Honorem Deorum, quos ultrà sui causâ placere deberet. *Ibid. Cap. 28.*

and (if you will have it so) without any Sort of Obstruction from the Magistrate; and yet to affirm that those are deservedly punished, who under a false Persuasion are not content to be in Error themselves, unless also they be allowed openly to decry and vilify the Gods of their Country.

THE Use that I intend to make of this, is only to confirm what has been before laid down, to wit, that neither Christ nor his Apostles ever taught their Followers to believe that the Civil Magistrate has nothing to do to concern himself with Religion: For had they taught any such Doctrine, the Primitive Christians, as they could not have been ignorant of it, so neither could they have avoided taking Notice of it upon such Occasions as these: At least they could not so grossly have dissembled, nor have been so weakly unjust to themselves and their own Cause, as to declare in Favour of the contrary Opinion. But that no such Doctrine should have been taught, if it were a true Doctrine; that the Civil Powers should be suffer'd to go on in an inveterate Error, of so much Consequence to the Order of Society, and to the State of Religion throughout the World, without the least Reprehension from those who were sent by Providence to be the Reformers of Mankind; (especially considering, as I before observed, that God had, as it were, given Countenance to the Mistake, in that only Commonwealth which was of his own Appointment; this I say) is a Thing so incredible, that with me, it will always stand as a Foundation strong enough to bear even the whole Weight of the Cause. But as to our Adversaries, all I shall demand of them is, That they would admit the Silence of the Scripture, (upon which, for Want of better Argument, they would seem sometimes to lay a mighty Stress) to be as strong an Objection at least against their Opinion, as it is against ours. If so, the Cause will thus far hang *in Æquilibrio*; and whether the other Considerations which I have here offer'd, thrown into our Scale, are not of Moment sufficient to turn the Ballance, is what I now submit to the Judgment of the World. I know not that I have any where imposed a Fallacy upon the Reader: And that it may the more readily appear, either that I have not, or, if I have, where it lies; I think it proper to subjoin the following *Analysis*, which contains the whole Weight of this, and of the foregoing Chapter.

The Analysis of an Argument proving the Magistrate's general Right to support and encourage true Religion by Human Laws.

DEFINITIONS.

1. **B**Y the true Religion, I mean any true Way of Worship, whether it be discoverable by the mere Light of Nature, or whether it be of Divine, Positive Institution.

2. By the Magistrate I understand the Person or Persons, in whom the supreme Legislative Power in any Commonwealth is lodged.

3. By his Right to encourage, &c. I mean his Right consider'd as Magistrate, or consider'd as acting in his Publick Capacity.

POSTULATUM.

THAT true Religion in the Nature of the Thing is capable of being supported and encouraged by the Methods of Civil Administration.

S E C T. I.

Of the Magistrate's Right to support and encourage true Religion by and under the Law of Nature.

P R O P O S I T I O N S.

1. **T**HE Concern of the Magistrate ought to bear an exact and adequate Proportion to the End of his Office.

2. It is on all Hands acknowledged that one End of the Magistrate's Office is the securing of the Publick Civil Good.

3. THEREFORE whatever affects the Publick Civil Good falls under the Magistrate's Care.

4. TRUE Religion (which under the Law of Nature is nothing else than Moral Virtue) does certainly affect the Publick Civil Good, 1. As the Publick Civil Good is concerned in the Behaviour of the Subject, upon which Religion, or the Want of Religion, must always have a very sensible Influence; And, 2. As the Publick Civil Good is concerned in the Pleasure or Displeasure of Almighty God, who (as the Heathens themselves understood, and the Scriptures do plainly declare) blesteth those who pay a due Reverence to his Name, and frequently punisheth whole Nations *for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein.*

5. UPON both these Accounts then, it is evident that the Magistrate's Care reaches to Natural Religion, and not (as some have pretended) to the bare external Actions of Men, exclusive of the Religion of such Actions. For bare external Actions can neither procure the Blessings of Providence, nor avert or remove his Judgments. Nor can that outward Regularity of Behaviour, which is necessary to the Welfare of all Publick Societies, be effectually secured, without securing that inward Virtue or Morality which ought to be the Foundation of such outward Behaviour.

It appears by the foregoing Propositions that the Magistrate is concerned to take Care of Natural Religion indirectly, or in virtue of his being concerned to take Care of the Publick Civil Good. It may be proper now to consider whether the Magistrate be concerned to take Care of Natural Religion, any otherwise than as he is concerned to take Care of the Publick Civil Good. It is my Opinion that he is otherwise concerned; In-somuch that if it were possible to separate Natural Religion from the Publick Civil Good, it would still be his Duty to take Care of Natural Religion. For,

6. As the Concern of the Magistrate ought to bear an exact and adequate Proportion to the End of his Office; so the End of the Magistrate's Office is to be measured by the End of Commonwealths: Which (whatever has been pretended of late) I cannot believe, in their original Institution, to relate merely to Publick Civil Good exclusive of Religion. What was in Fact the End propounded when Men first of all entered into Society, it is neither possible for us to know, nor at all material to the present Question. Because, supposing Men in a State of Natural Liberty, and intending to give up that Liberty or any Part of it, into the Hands of any particular Person or Persons, for their Common Good, (which is the Scheme of Government upon which I proceed;) Supposing this, I say, By the same Right that one Set or Number of Men in one Place propose one End, another Set or Number of Men in another Place may pro-

propose other Ends: And that will be the most perfect Commonwealth, by which all those good and warrantable Ends are proposed, which may be answered or provided for, by living in Society. Wherefore,

7. SINCE the present Controversy relates not to any particular Commonwealth, but to Commonwealths in general and at large; when it is asked, What is the End of a Commonwealth? The Meaning of that Question must be, What is the End, or what are the Ends which a Number of Wise and Reasonable Men in a State of Natural Liberty, may and ought to propose by quitting that Liberty, and coalescing into a Body Politick? And whatever those Ends be, which it is, in the Nature of Things, proper and fitting that such a Number of Men should propose; those must be esteemed to be the Ends of Commonwealths according to their original Institution. The Ends I say; Not according to what in Fact have been (for in this Respect there may have been great Diversity in different Times, and different Places;) but according to what in Reason ought to be, and what in Fact always must be, where a Commonwealth subsists in its utmost Perfection. Wherefore,

8. ALTHOUGH the securing themselves from mutual Injuries, and the promoting each others Temporal Good, is doubtless one of those Ends which a Number of Wise and Reasonable Men in a State of Liberty, may and ought to propose by entering into Society; Yet this is not the only End. For Wise and Reasonable Men cannot be supposed to be less concerned for the Honour of God (whose Creatures they are) and their future Happiness, than for their present Temporal Advantages. God's Honour is his true Worship: By this our future and main Interest is secured. Wherefore since (as the Question supposes) true Religion is in the Nature of it capable of being supported and encouraged by the Laws of Society, as well as the Publick Civil Good; The Consequence must be, That the supporting and encouraging true Religion, is also one of those Ends, which a Number of Wise and Reasonable Men in a State of Natural Liberty, may and ought to propose by entering into Society.

9. To evince the Truth of this Assertion yet farther, let us consider the great Need there is, that even Natural Religion should be supported and encouraged by Human Laws. The Law of Natural Religion is indeed no other, than the Law of Natural Reason. But then it is the Law of Reason rightly exercised and carefully improved, which leaves Room for all those Errors to creep in, which may be the Effect of Want of Judgment, or Want of Consideration: And how many and how great these may be, the Condition of the World, before the Preaching of the Gospel, is a sad and lamentable Instance. Furthermore; Natural Religion is the Practice of those Duties to which the Light of Nature directs us, from which all Men are too prone to be led aside by their Vices and their Passions. To obviate these Evils, what effectual Remedy can be found, but from the Care of the Magistrate in providing both that Instruction be constantly and regularly administered to the People, and that proper and seasonable Restraints be laid upon Evil Doers? the Want of which Things was the true Reason, why so much Ignorance, Superstition, and Wickedness, prevailed in the Heathen World. Every Master finds the Usefulness and Necessity of these Methods in his own Family; and Reason and Experience shews them to be as necessary in the Commonwealth. Wise and Reasonable Men therefore (*i. e.* Men who are under a just Concern for God and Religion) cannot, in framing themselves into a Body Politick, neglect the Consideration of these Things, but must have a due Regard to them; not only with a View to Publick Civil Good, but purely and immediately for the Sake of God and Religion.

UPON the whole then I think it appears that the Magistrate is concerned to take Care of Natural Religion, both directly and indirectly: Indirectly, as he is the Guardian of the Publick Civil Good, which has a necessary Dependence upon Natural Religion; and directly, as, in virtue of an immediate Obligation, he is also the Guardian of Religion.

S E C T. II.

Of the Magistrate's Right to encourage true Religion under the Gospel Revelation.

PROPOSITIONS.

1. **W**HATEVER Right the Magistrate had to support and encourage true Religion under the Law of Nature; the same Right he has to encourage true Religion now under the Gospel, if the Gospel has made no Difference.

2. THE Gospel hath made no Difference. For if it has, this Difference must have arisen either, 1. From hence, that the Gospel hath somewhere prohibited the Christian Magistrate to support and encourage Christianity; Or, 2. From hence, that, in the Nature of the Thing, there is not the same Reason why the Christian Magistrate should concern himself with Christianity, as there is why the Magistrate Christian or not Christian, should concern himself with Natural Religion. But neither of these Allegations is true. Therefore the Gospel has made no Difference.

To make good what I say concerning the first Branch of the foregoing Disjunction, it is enough to observe that no such Prohibition is to be found in the Gospel. To make good what I say as to the second, it will be needful to look back to those Reasons which have been offer'd to prove the Magistrate's Right to encourage Natural Religion, and to shew that they infer the same Things with Respect to Revealed Religion, i. e. with Respect to Christianity, which is now supposed to be the true Revealed Religion. Now these Reasons referring to the double Capacity in which the Magistrate may be considered, (viz. his Capacity as Guardian of the Publick Civil Good, and his Capacity as Guardian of Religion;) they must therefore be distinctly spoken to. And

1. As Guardian of the Publick Civil Good.

3. It hath been shewn that the Magistrate is concerned to take Care of Natural Religion, because the Publick Civil Good has a necessary Dependence upon the Behaviour of the Subject, which is always influenced by Religion or the Want of Religion. Now this Reason will extend the Magistrate's Concern even to Christianity. For as Morality is the Foundation of a good Civil Behaviour; so Christianity is evidently a great Support of Morality. I will not deny but that a Man may be Morally good who is no Christian: And Fact shews that Government may well subsist where there is no Revelation. But it is nevertheless true that Morality is greatly secured by the Religion of the Gospel, whose Precepts and whose Motives are both an Improvement and Enforcement of the Law of Nature. Supposing then, but not granting, that the Magistrate is not concerned to take Care of Christianity for its own Sake; he is notwithstanding concerned to take Care of it, for the Sake of Morality.

4. WHAT is here said of Christianity in general and at large, is proportionably true of its particular Branches. For the Whole subsists by its Parts: And whatever weakens or destroys one Part of the Christian Revelation, has

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a manifest Tendency to weaken and destroy all the rest. The Observance or Non-observance of positive Institutions has no necessary immediate Connection with Morality; yet it concerns the Magistrate that the Observance of them be encouraged for the Sake and on the Account of Morality. For these Institutions were appointed as Instruments to secure the Righteousness of the Gospel; which (as has afore been observed) is both the Safeguard and Perfection of Morality. But farther yet, and

5. It has been shewn that the Magistrate is concerned to take Care of Natural Religion, because the Happiness of Society is concerned in the Favour, or Displeasure of Almighty God, consider'd as the Author of Temporal Blessing, or Temporal Cursing; which Reasoning may in its full Force be applied as well to Points of Revealed Religion. There may be Iniquity against a Revealed and Positive, as well as against a Natural and Moral Law. Now all Iniquity is the proper Subject of the Divine Correction. And we must not forget the Instances we meet with in Scripture, where God threatens to punish the *Jews* for their Disobedience to his own Institutions. As he tenders then the Publick Good, the Magistrate is so far concerned to take Care of the Laws and Institutions of Revealed Religion, as to see (as much as in him lies) that they be not either ignorantly mistaken, or carelessly neglected, or insolently and prophanely vilified and set at nought.

Thus far we have consider'd the Magistrate as Guardian of the Publick Civil Good; It remains now that we consider him,

2. *As Guardian of Religion; In which Respect it is plain that the Supposition of a Revelation, or of no Revelation, can make no Difference. For*

6. IF the Magistrate has a Right to take Care of Natural Religion, merely because it is Religion (which is the Case;) It will follow that he is concerned to take Care of any Positive Law or Institution, when, in virtue of the Divine Authority injoyning or commanding it, it comes to be Religion. This, I say, must be the Consequence, upon Supposition that it be needful that such Divine, Positive, Laws or Institutions, be supported and encouraged by Human Authority. I observe then,

7. THAT the Laws of Revealed Religion have Need to be supported and encouraged by Human Authority, as well as the Laws of Natural Religion. For those Vices and Passions by which Men are apt to be led to the Neglect and Disobedience of the Laws of Natural Religion, have a like Tendency to lead them to neglect and disobey the Laws of Revealed Religion: And therefore the same Remedies which are needful with Respect to the one, are needful also with Respect to the other.

THE Conclusion then is; That the Magistrate's Right to encourage both Natural and Revealed Religion, stands upon one and the same Foundation.

C H A P. IV.

Containing an Answer to the Principal Objections.

THE Doctrine I would advance being thus far deduced, by way of direct and positive Proof from Principles (as I hope) plain and evident; I come now to consider the most material Objections that have been made against it. Of which that the Reader may have a clear and distinct View, he is desired to recollect, that the Right pleaded for in the foregoing Chapters, is a Right in the Civil Magistrate, by the Methods above specified, to support and encourage, not Religion in general, but the True Religion only. And great Necessity was there for stating the Question in these Terms, because there can be no Pretence that the Magistrate, or any one else, can have a Right to encourage a False Religion; at least, not under the Notion and Formality of a False Religion. Hence then ariseth a very material Question, *viz.* By whose Judgment must the Magistrate be determined, which, among the Variety of Religions professed in the World, is the true Religion, which alone ought to be encouraged: And the Answer seems plain and obvious; to wit, that he must be determined by his own. For the encouraging Religion is to be consider'd as a Branch of the Magistrate's Conduct, for which he stands accountable to God the supreme King and Governour of the Earth; and in which therefore, as well as in all other Matters where Reason and Conscience is concerned, his own Judgment must be his immediate Rule.

I. Now this Observation makes Way for the first Objection, which is this, That since it is allowed that the Magistrate is to judge for himself what is the true Religion; to say that the Magistrate hath a Right to encourage the true Religion, is to say that he hath a Right to encourage that Religion which he thinks or believes to be the true Religion; which gives every Magistrate an equal Right to encourage his own Religion, and alike justifies the Encouragement of Falshood in Opposition to Truth, (if it be received by the Magistrate under the Notion of Truth) and of Truth in Opposition to Falshood. But this Consequence I utterly deny. For Right (in the Sense wherein I speak of Right) is founded in the Nature and Reason of Things, which the Persuasions of Men cannot alter: And Error how far soever it may excuse, will never justify. It is true of every Man, as well as of the Magistrate, that he must be determined by his own Judgment in considering what is reasonable or unreasonable, what is fitting or unfitting. But if a Man should think it reasonable to take away my Goods, this will not give him a Right to do it; for one Man's Error cannot take away another's Property. So likewise it is true of the Magistrate in Civil Affairs as well as in Religious, that his own Judgment must be the Rule of his own Conduct. But does any one argue from hence that he has therefore a Right to oppress and tyrannize over his Subjects, in Case his Judgment should direct him to unreasonable Methods of Civil Administration? Either say that the Inference is just in one Case, or give it up in both: for the Parallel, as every one sees, leaves no Room for Distinction. Were it only said, that because the Magistrate's own Judgment is the Rule of his own Conduct, therefore it will be his Duty, or he will be obliged to encourage that Religion, which he believes to be the true; and consequently to encourage a False Religion, if he believes it to be the true; the Conclusion would be no other than what the Principles I am pleading for do naturally and necessarily infer. But it may be observed, and ought carefully to be attended to in all Disputes of this Nature, that a Man may be bound to do many Things which yet he hath no Right to do: And this is always the Case when Men are led aside by the Mistakes of their Judgments, which are enough to create an Obligation, but cannot,

cannot, as I said just now, affect the Nature of Things, so as to make them in any Respect otherwise than they were before. There is indeed a Sense in which the Magistrate may be said to have a Right to do a Thing which in it self is wrong; and that is as the Word is used relatively to Human Government, and implies only an Exemption from Civil Jurisdiction on the one Hand, and a Subjection to it on the other. In this Sense of the Word, I say, the Magistrate may sometimes have a Right to be obeyed even in unreasonable Laws, because in him resides the supreme Authority on Earth, whose Injunctions it may not always be permitted to the Subjects to dispute. But as this is not the Right which I am contending for, so neither is it that which our Adversaries mean. For the Right which they mean, is such a Right as is supposed to result from Error in the Magistrate; whereas the Right I now speak of, as is plain, has no Relation to Error, but is the same whether the Magistrate judgeth right, or whether he judgeth wrong.

To those therefore who charge it upon our Principles, that they authorize the establishing all Sorts of Errors; I must take Leave to reply, That they do but betray either great Carelessness in not distinguishing the plainest Things, or great Unfairness in loading with Calumny, what they do not find it so easy to disprove. I say it again, and must insist upon it, that an erroneous Judgment, though it obliges, cannot authorize. And if any one will oppose me in this, let him say roundly that every Man is authorized to do whatever he thinks is right and fitting; or in other Words that every one's own Opinion is the Measure of Right and Wrong; and see how it will be received. All that can with Truth be said is, That every one's own Opinion is to him the Measure of Right and Wrong; which comes up exactly to what I affirm, and goes no farther, to wit, that every Man is under an Obligation to do what his own Judgment directs him to, as if it were Right: For Right and Wrong have their determinate Limits, which are always and every where the same. Perhaps our Adversaries will tell us, that this is all that they mean themselves. Well; Let us but understand them, and I am satisfied. But if this be all, the Terror of the Objection vanishes at once, which seems to be intirely founded in the Ambiguity of the Terms by which it is expressed. To say absolutely that it is a just and a righteous Thing to establish Error, is to destroy the eternal Difference between Good and Evil: and the Principles which are justly chargeable with any such Inference, ought, without any farther Hearing, to be rejected as absurd. But to say that the Magistrate under certain Circumstances may be obliged to establish Error, is saying no more of him in his Station and Capacity than what is every Day seen of others in theirs: And it will require something more than the bare naming it, to give it the Force and Weight of an Argument. We can very well bear to have it told us, that the Heathen Magistrates were under an Obligation to make Laws to discourage Christianity, upon Supposition that they were persuaded that it was a false Religion; and that Papists are also obliged to make Laws against Protestantism, in Case they believe it to be a false Way of Worship: All this, I say, we can very well bear; provided it be allowed us (which in common Sense and Reason ought to be allowed us) that such Persuasions do not affect or alter the intrinsic Nature of Things: That there is still a certain, essential, Difference between Truth and Falshood, about which how much soever Men may mistake, perfect Wisdom never can: And that Christians and Protestants in their Use of Means for the Support and Encouragement of the Truth may be justified; whilst Heathens and Papists in making Use of the very same Means in Opposition to the Truth will be left unjustified. In a Word, I care not how far Men are pleased to carry the Obligation arising from an erroneous Conscience; provided they do not go about to sanctify those unrighteous Actions, which a Man may be led to through the Sense, and in Virtue of this Obligation.

II. THE Point then being brought to this Issue, *viz.* That the Principles above laid down give no Right or Authority to the Magistrate to establish his own Errors; we must next see what will naturally follow from allowing (what indeed cannot be denied) that he is obliged or bound to do it. And the Consequence is indeed plain; That since it is the Duty of every Magistrate to encourage that Religion which he in his own Judgment believes to be the true; it will in Fact happen, that Error will many Times be encouraged in the Room of Truth. And if it should so fall out (which has for the most Part been the Case) that the greater Part of the governing Powers throughout the World do embrace Error; Error will most generally be established. All this I say is undoubtedly true. But what follows farther? Why, here we are usually entertained with the general Harangues upon the deplorable State of Religion in *Popish* and *Mahometan* Countries. But there is no Point which more stands in Need of a proper Distinction than this: And how terrible soever the Objection may seem, the Reader will find that I have nothing to fear from it, when I have replied to it, upon two Hypotheses. For

I. IF the Meaning of the Objection be barely this, That Human Laws when made Use of to encourage a False Religion, will do much Hurt to the True; and that therefore the Magistrate, who may be mistaken in judging what is true Religion, ought not to be vested with the Power of encouraging it by Human Laws: If this Objection, I say, goes no farther than this, The Premises are true, but the Conclusion is false, because it proves a great deal too much, *i. e.* more than the Objectors themselves intend, and more than in common Sense and Reason can be admitted of. The Objection is commonly applied to Worldly Motives, *i. e.* to outward Restraint only. But in Reality, it lies against all Methods, as well as against one. For Since it is in the Nature of all Methods that can be made Use of to support true Religion, that they will hurt true Religion if they be employed against it; and since you can allow of no Means to be made Use of for the Support of Truth, which must not also be allowed to be made Use of for the Support of Error, in Case Error happens to be received as Truth: The Consequence is, that if this be admitted as a good Reason why outward Restraint ought to be laid aside, it will be as good a Reason why all other Methods ought to be laid aside as well as this. That the Reader may feel the Weight of this Reply, he need only to take the Objection in their own Words, and try if it may not be applied with equal Strength against any Method he can think of. (q) "The Case then (say they) is
 " this; That the Rule being once laid down that the Civil Magistrate is to
 " add the Sanctions of this World to Religion: It becomes the indispensable
 " Duty of every Magistrate to annex them to that which he himself esteems to
 " be true Religion.—So that if he himself be of a false Religion, he is obliged
 " in Conscience by this Rule, to promote it by his Worldly Sanctions if he be-
 " lieves it to be a true one. A *Mahometan*, a *Pagan*, a *Jew*, a *Papist*, are every
 " one of them under the same Obligation to promote the Profession of their
 " own Religion, and their own Way of Worship." Thus goes the Objection. I will now ask, whether the same Argument may not as well be applied to *Publick Instruction* and *Persuasion*. And the Thing is plain and undeniable. For
 " the Case (say I) is this, That the Rule being once laid down, that there ought
 " to be Persons appointed by Publick Authority to instruct the Ignorant in the
 " Knowledge of God's true Religion; it becomes the indispensable Duty of those
 " in whom this Authority is lodged, to appoint such Persons as will teach those
 " Doctrines, which they themselves shall judge to be true Religion; and con-
 " sequently such Persons as shall teach a false Religion if they believe it to be
 " a true one. And thus a *Mahometan*, a *Pagan*, a *Jew*, a *Papist*, (and as many

(q) Answ. to the Committee. p. 167.

" other

“ other Sects as you can conceive) are under the same Obligation to promote “ their own Religion, and their own Way of Worship.” Will true Religion be hurt by this Misapplication of Instruction, or will it not? ’Tis plain that it will, so long as there are Men in the World (and Multitudes there will always be of such) who are capable of being imposed upon by false Reasoning. But this perhaps you’ll say is what our Adversaries would have; who being for removing the Care of Religion entirely out of the Magistrate’s Hands, must be supposed to allow that he has as little to do to make any Publick Provision for the Administration of Instruction; as to make any other Provision whereby Religion may be supported and encouraged. Right. But even here the Objection does not end. It reaches to all Private Methods of Instruction, and shews (if it shews any Thing) that Parents ought to lay aside that timely Care, which Nature as well as Religion teaches them to exercise towards their Children. For it is true of Parents as well as of Pastors and Magistrates, that their own Judgment is their Rule; and no Body needs to be told that much Mischief will follow, if being themselves mistaken in their Notions of Religion, they breed up their Children in Error and Superstition.

I WILL not stay to enlarge upon these Matters; For in short there is nothing in the Objection as thus stated, which may not be made Use of as an Argument against any Thing, which either through the Weakness or through the Corruption of Men, may be applied to a bad Purpose. If our Adversaries will not grant that the Magistrate has any thing to do with Religion, they will own at least that he has to do with the Publick Civil Good. And in Truth if he has nothing to do either with the one or with the other, there is an End of all Government. And the Matter will at last come to this, if the present Way of Reasoning be allowed to be just. For the Case is clear, that what through Ignorance of the true Means to secure the Publick Good on the one Hand, and what through Avarice and Ambition on the other, there may be a Misapplication of Power; and then all those Evils will follow with Respect to the Civil Concerns of Men, which in virtue of a like Misapplication will follow with Regard to their Religious. If Mr. *Locke* had well consider’d this, he would have found less Cause to make himself merry with those; who, (r) *because all Men are promiscuously apt to be misled by Passion and Lust, are for putting the Care of Religion into the Hands of those* (meaning the Magistrates) *who are as apt to be misled by Passion and Lust as themselves.* For let me ask: Is not the very Reason of Civil Government founded in this, that Men are apt to be misled by their Passions and Lusts? And is not the chusing of a Magistrate (supposing his Office to reach no farther than to the Concerns of this Life) an Instance beyond all Exception, that it is reasonable, in order to prevent those Evils which would arise from the Lusts and Passions of many, to bring them under the Power of one, or of a few, who are as liable to be misled by Lust and Passion as themselves? What odd Work is this! You would have Magistrates, not Men, but Creatures above them. With all my Heart, if you can tell where to find them. But so long as we are Men, we must be contented to be governed (if we will be governed at all) by Men. And if so, the Reason is yet wanting, why those Evils which arise from the Misapplication of Power, are an Objection against the Magistrate’s Right in one Case, and no Objection in another; although the Evils which may be apprehended, are, according to their respective Natures, the same in both. What is said of Civil Government in general, is true of all those several Ways and Means by which Civil Government is supported and maintained. I will instance only in the Case of War, which has been always adjudged to be a lawful and proper Means of Defence, when one Nation invades the Property of another Nation, and there is no other Way left to bring them to reasonable Terms. But how stands the Case, admitting the present Obje-

(r) 3d Letter for Toleration. p. 31.

tion to be just? Why for ought that I can perceive, the Magistrate is as much to blame when he engages his Subjects in a War for the Defence of the State, as when he makes Laws for the Support of Religion: For “the Case will again be this, That the Rule being once laid down, that the Magistrate is to make War in Defence of Civil Right and Property; every Magistrate will make War in Defence of that which he calls Right and Property, and consequently in the Defence of what was gotten by Rapine and Oppression, if he calls that Right and Property.” Where is the Difference between the Argument as applied to one Case, and as applied to the other? I declare I can see none; and Fact justifies it alike in both. If our Adversaries can give Instances of false Opinions, supported by Human Laws under the Notion of true Religion; it will be no hard Matter to give them as many Instances of false Claims, supported by Force of Arms under the Notion of Civil Right: And if we take the World round I believe it will be found, that for one War justly entered into, there have been ten undertaken through Avarice and the Lust of Power. The Evil is great in both Cases without doubt. But what then? Does any one think this to be a good Reason against the Use of War? Must one Nation sit down and tamely submit to be ravaged by another; because Magistrates may be Wicked and Ambitious, or because Mistakes may be committed in judging about Right and Property? ——— ’Tis high time to have done; for we are now going to dispute the very first Principles of Common Sense.

UPON this Foot then you see, the Objection is palpably defective: And that I may shew wherein it is so, and thereby lead the Reader to a true State of the Question, I must observe; That as the impulsive Cause which moved Men at first to enter into Society, was the Experience they had that Mankind, though reasonable Creatures, are generally disposed to be led aside by their Vices and their Passions: So, that which determines them in the Choice of a Magistrate, *i. e.* of any particular Person or Persons, to be vested with Authority to controul the rest, is a Supposition that such Person or Persons will make a just and a proper Use of the Power that is given them. If this Supposition were founded upon an absolute Certainty, it would then be reasonable to put any Power into the Magistrate’s Hand, which being applied as it ought to be applied, will do Good. But there being no such absolute Certainty so long as Men are Men: Thus much must be yielded to our Opposers, that in vesting the Magistrate with Power, great Regard ought to be had to those Consequences, which may probably ensue in Case that Power falls into ill Hands. And the Rule I conceive is this; that where the Consequences which may in Reason ordinarily be apprehended from the Misapplication of any Power are as bad as, or worse than, those which may be apprehended from the Want of such Power; that no such Power ought to be given. On the contrary it must be reasonable to put any Power into the Magistrate’s Hand, which being rightly used will procure greater Good, than the Misapplication of it will ordinarily procure Evil. This is the Case of Civil Government in general, the entire Want of which would be attended with worse Consequences than those which can ordinarily arise from Male-administration. The like may be said of War, without the Use of which no Government can possibly subsist. And in all these Cases, the Rule proceeds upon this allowed Maxim, that of two Evils the least is always to be chosen. Wherefore,

2. To make the Objection any Thing to the Purpose, it must stand thus; That because the Consequences which will ordinarily happen from Magistrates making Use of an Authority given them to support true Religion, toward the encouraging false Religions, are such, that upon the whole it would be better for Religion, if Magistrates had no such Authority given them; therefore no such Authority ought to be given them. And if this be what our Adversaries would say, the Conclusion indeed will be just, but then the Premises are certainly

tainly false; or at least will contain a great deal more than can be proved to be true. For how do they prove it? Why, as I said before, by bidding us *look into the Popish, Pagan, and Mahometan Countries*. Well; 'Tis done: And what do I see? Enough I own to move the Pity and Indignation of every serious and good Man. But yet I am not certain (nor do I think it possible for them to shew me) that if there never had been any Publick Provision made for the Support of Religion by Civil Magistrates, the State of Religion throughout the World would not have been in a far more deplorable Condition, than it is now under all the Corruptions above mentioned. For by these Provisions a general Sense of Religion and of Morality, an Awe for a supreme invisible Power, which is the Foundation of all Religion, are, amidst all the Corruptions so much complain'd of, tolerably preserved. If any Man thinks otherwise, let him compare the State of Religion in *Turkey, China*, or any Civilized Country, with the Religion of the *Hottentots*, who are as free from all Restraints of Civil Power, as they are from all Sense of Religion. The same Thing may be said of Christianity, which, if left destitute of all Support from Human Laws, might (for ought that appears at least to the contrary) have by this Time been every where degenerated into a Superstition worse than that of *Popery*. But this is a Point which I have no need to dispute; because I am not bound, nor indeed is it right, to make an Estimate of those Consequences which will ordinarily happen from the Misapplication of Power, from what has happen'd in *Turkey*, or in *Spain*, or elsewhere. The Competition at present is between an Establishment and no Establishment. Now 'tis plain that the bad Consequences which are visible in those Countries, have arisen not merely from hence, that every Magistrate has established his own Religion; but from some particular Way or Manner of establishing Religion, which as yet I am at full Liberty either to approve of, or to condemn. There may be some Ways of providing for the Support of Religion, the Consequences of which may (for ought I know) be worse than the Consequences of no Provision at all. Let us suppose Dragooning, Imprisoning, Burning, and the like, to be of this Sort. But as it is evident that these Methods are not essential to an Establishment; 'tis obvious also that what concludes against the former, will not therefore conclude against the latter. It may be true that some Sorts of Establishments are wrong; but it will not follow from thence that there ought to be no Establishment at all.

To draw this Point then towards a Conclusion; I say in a few Words, that the true Way of computing the Difference in this Case, will be to consider every particular Way, by which true Religion may be supposed capable of being supported and encouraged; and see what will be the Consequence in Case the same Methods be made Use of to promote Error. This will be more distinctly spoken to in the next Chapter, wherein the several Branches of the Magistrate's Authority will be particularly treated of. At present we are only considering Establishments in general, which in the most simple and absolute Notion must (as I have often hinted) be understood to imply one or other of these two Things, *viz.* A Right in the Magistrate to make a Publick Provision for the Administration of Instruction; and a Right also to apply Outward Restraint, as a Check to the Carelessness and Wantonness of Men. Either of these by it self will create what may be termed an Establishment: though an Establishment will be much better by the former without the latter, than by the latter without the former. But as they are subservient the one to the other; so that Establishment will be most perfect where they both of them subsist together. These two Particulars must therefore in general be cleared from the present Objection. And as to the first, I think there can be no Pretence in saying that the Consequences of Instruction, supposing it to be promiscuously applied both for and against the Truth, will be worse than the Consequences of no Instruction; *i. e.* (for it will at last come almost to the

same Thing) of no Publick Provision made for Instruction. For the one Method tends only to the promoting of Error among some Persons, and in some Places; whereas the other paves the Way to universal Ignorance and Depravity of Manners. According to my Rule (say you) as a Protestant Magistrate will be obliged to provide that his Subjects be instructed in the Protestant Religion; so a Popish Magistrate will be obliged to provide that his be instructed in the Doctrines of Popery; and a Mahometan that his be instructed in the Doctrines of *Mahomet*. Very true. But better is it that Christianity be taught somewhere, than that it be taught no where. Better to have Religion, though blended with some false and corrupt Notions, than to have no Religion at all. The like may be said of Outward Restraint, which may be so adapted as to the Degree and Measure of it; that supposing it every where made Use of alike, it will upon the Whole, and in the Conclusion, be more for the Interest of Religion, than if, being wholly laid aside, every Man were left free without Check or Controul to follow the Bent of his own Passions. The great Objection is, that Outward Restraint stops the Way to all Reformation where it is wanting: And whatever Method has this Effect is most certainly wrong; because it is to be apprehended that the Misapplication of such a Method will ordinarily do more Mischief, than the right Use of it will do Good. But if this be the Case of some kinds of Outward Restraint only, and not of all: If such a Check may be given to those who differ from the National Religion, as will be of great Service where Truth is encouraged; and yet leave room for the beating down of Error in those Countries where it happens to be established in the room of Truth: If this I say be the Case, I should hope it will be allowed that the Objection is sufficiently answered. And that this is the Case, will be shewn (as I said before) when we come to determine the precise Boundaries of the Magistrate's Authority. In the mean while, what would follow from an absolute Indulgence, we may be allowed to conjecture from what has ever happen'd, where such an Indulgence has been admitted of. In the Heathen World Human Invention was very much indulged; the Consequence of which was, that Gods were multiplied without Number, and Superstition increased without End. These Corruptions perhaps you will charge to the Want of proper Instruction: But what will you say to the Corruptions which have grown up under the Profession of the Gospel? The Gospel it self is the best Instruction, yet it was soon polluted in its Doctrines, as well as in its Practices: And 'tis observable that the first 300 Years produced a greater Variety of absurd Opinions, than have been produced in above a Thousand since. The Reasons of this have heretofore been open'd at large; and it is not needful now to repeat them: For in short every Man of common Observation must agree, that an absolute Indulgence must ever be attended with bad Consequences. Now if there be any Method of applying Outward Restraint by which these Consequences will either wholly, or in a good Degree, be avoided, and no Evils arise sufficient to ballance them on the other Side, (which is what I hope to shew;) the Reasonableness of empowering the Magistrate to make Use of such a Method, will no longer bear the being disputed. Wherefore,

III. HAVING thus removed the most considerable Objections, those which follow will be answer'd with less Difficulty. It is said then, that "the annexing the Motives of this World to the Profession of any particular Religion, is a great Temptation to Hypocrisy;" and hence they argue, that "the Use of them ought to be laid aside." But this Argument is faulty in the same Respect with the former, and may therefore be replied to the same Way. If it be a good Reason against the Use of Worldly Motives, that they may be drawn into an Occasion of Sin; it must be as good a Reason against every Thing which may be drawn into an Occasion of Sin; in which Way of Reasoning a hundred Things will be proved to be wrong, which yet no Man in his right Senses ever imagined to be so. If a Child knows he shall be beaten
for

for his Faults, this will be a Temptation to him to tell Lies. But did ever any one think this to be a sufficient Argument against Paternal Correction? But I will put another Case, which may be thought perhaps of greater Moment, and that is the Case of requiring an Oath as a Test or Evidence of Men's Loyalty and Affection to the Government, which is plainly liable to the same Exception. For is not the annexing Civil Privileges to the taking of an Oath, as great a Temptation to a Man to swear against his Conscience; as the annexing the like Privileges to his going to Church, or to his receiving the Sacrament, is to conform against his Conscience? Have there not been as many led into Perjury by the former Method, as into Hypocrisy and Prevarication by the latter? And yet this is not allowed to be a sufficient Objection against the common Practice of requiring Oaths, nor is it a sufficient Objection in all Instances. The Truth in all these Cases is one and the same; to wit, That where there are Reasons sufficient to justify the Use of any Means; the Liableness of such Means to be perverted to a bad End, is never to be regarded. To *do evil that good may come*, is what we cannot justify; nor ought we needlessly to lay those *stumbling Blocks in our Brother's Way*, which may be unto him an *Occasion of falling*. But we may, yea, we must, do good though evil should happen; and if that which contributes to the Advantage of many, should be abused by a few, to their own Mischief; they must bear the Weight of it themselves: Neither the Means, nor they who propose and make Use of the Means have any thing to do with it.

IV. It is farther alledged that "Worldly Grandeur, great Power and Riches, naturally tend to take Men's Minds from true Religion, and the true Motives of it." The Meaning of which I presume is, that they tend to corrupt Men's Morals, and to make them careless in the Business of Religion; And we are farther told that *(s) the same Things must have ordinarily the same Effect, upon all Sorts of Men in this State of Probation*. What Novelries are here! Common Sense and Experience shew plainly that ordinarily the same Things have different Effects, according as Men are differently Disposed. Riches and Power are the Gifts of God for great and excellent Ends, which some use as they ought, and others as they ought not. But whatever the Result of this be, the careful Reader will observe, that the Observation has no Relation to the Point in hand; because the Mischiefs arising from the Abuse of these Things, will be the same under either Method. There would be just as much Grandeur, Power and Riches in the World, though none of them were made Use of to encourage true Religion, though 'tis likely they would not fall into the same Hands. But into whose Hands soever they might fall, they would have the same Tendency to take their Minds from true Religion, unless you think that because a Man embraces the true Religion, he is therefore the less qualified to make a proper Use of God's Blessings. I am not therefore able to see to what this Objection tends, unless it be to impeach the Providence of God, which it effectually doth; it being just as good an Argument to prove, that there ought to have been no such Things as Worldly Greatness, Power, and Riches, as that the Magistrate ought not to make Use of them for the Support of Religion. So that if they do not mean this, let them confess their Mistake: But if they do, I pray God give them a better Mind; that if he hath dealt with them (as he does with the very best of us) better than they deserve, they may acknowledge his Goodness with Thankfulness, and not, like pamper'd Horses, kick and spurn at him that feeds them.

V. LASTLY, (for this is the only remaining Cavil) It has been alledged that "Because Almighty God has annexed the Sanctions of another and a future

(s) Answ. to Dr. Snape. p. 42.

“ State to Christ’s Laws; this is the very Reason why Worldly Sanctions should not be annexed to them: Because of two Sorts of Motives, without doubt perfect Wisdom chuses the most proper Sort.” But to this a short Answer will suffice, *viz.* That perfect Wisdom may chuse a Variety of Motives, all of them proper in their respective Places and Degrees: And that his having chosen the Motives of another World, carries not with it so much as the Face of an Argument to shew that he hath not also chosen the Motives of this. If you say that God hath not chosen the Motives of this World, it shall be admitted for Truth when you have proved it. But you cannot, I say, prove it merely from this Consideration, that he hath chosen the Motives of another. For my chusing a Means in order to a certain End, doth not imply that to be the only Means which I have chosen. To save you then all farther trouble, I maintain that in order to support and encourage true Religion, God hath chosen the Motives of this World, as well as the Motives of another. Nor can it be denied, if it be true that he hath made it to be the Magistrate’s Duty to apply these Motives for the Support and Encouragement of true Religion. Whether therefore this be true, or whether it be not true, I must leave the Reader to judge from the Arguments that have already been, and from such as shall hereafter be, laid before him.

C H A P. V.

Wherein the Authority of the Magistrate in Matters of Religion is more distinctly and particularly considered.

I HAVE now done with the Point in general; and the Conclusion comes to this, and no more than this, *viz.* That the Magistrate, as such, has a Right, by the Methods of Civil Administration, to support and encourage true Religion, both Natural and Revealed. And in order to this End that he hath Authority, at the Publick Expence, to provide that Instruction be duly and regularly administered to the People; and to apply Temporal Motives on the Side of true Religion, in such a Sort as may be proper to check and restrain the Inordinate Passions of Men. But by what Ways he is to provide for the Administration of Instruction, and how far he may go in the Use and Application of Worldly Motives, are Questions which still afford Matter for a more distinct Inquiry. For Differences may sometimes arise from special Reasons, and particular Cases may be assigned, which shall stand excepted from general Rules.

THESE Points therefore must be minutely enter’d into. And as a Foundation for the whole, it will be proper to observe, That the Rule or Law to which the Supreme Power in any Commonwealth is subject in the Execution of his Office is, 1. The Universal Law of Reason, either alone by it self, or assisted by the Light of Revelation: And, 2. Those Human Appointments (if any such there are) which have been agreed upon by the whole Body as the Groundwork of their Polity, and the Conditions upon which they have consented to become a Society under such a particular Head or Supreme Governour. These previous Appointments, I say, do so far bind the Magistrate, that without the Consent of the whole Society, he cannot lawfully act in Opposition to them. But with these we have at present nothing to do. For the Question being concerning the Authority of the Supreme Power at large, and not as limited by the particular Constitutions of particular Commonwealths; It must therefore be considered as subject to no other Laws than those which are common to every Society as such, *i. e.* to the Law of Reason only: Which, if

if the Person or Persons, in whom such Supreme Power is vested, contradict, they are guilty of a Breach of their Duty, First, to God, whose Law the Law of Reason is; and Secondly to their Subjects, who are reasonable Creatures, and cannot therefore be presumed to have consented to be governed any otherwise than as reasonable Creatures ought to be governed.

THIS being premised, I come to the Particulars under Consideration. And as to the first, to wit, the providing for the due Administration of Instruction, 'tis evident, as has afore been noted, that there are divers Ways in which it may be done. The settling a Maintenance for Parochial Preachers; erecting Schools; and other Publick Nurseries of good Literature, and pious Education; and the protecting and encouraging those who are willing to contribute towards carrying on such useful Designs, are all of them in their respective Orders and Degrees, Means proper to this End. Nor can any Exception in point of Lawfulness, lie against one more than against another. The same Reasons which justify the first, will justify all the rest; and it may be said in general that the more is done in any of these Ways, so much the better. This only must be considered, That in making Provisions of this Sort, a due Regard should be had to the Safety of the Commonwealth, as well as to the immediate Interests of Religion. The Teachers of Religion should not be suffer'd to struggle with Poverty, whilst the State abounds in Wealth: Nor should the Magistrate so far give way to an indiscreet Zeal, as under the Notion of doing Honour to God, to bring a real Mischief upon the State (and in the End upon Religion too) by being unreasonably and immoderately profuse in his Donations. A due Temper should be preserved between both Extreams, that whilst as the Servants of God we rejoice at the Encouragement that is given to the Labours of those who minister to his Glory and our Common Salvation; we may not as the Subjects of Men, and as Members of Civil Society, find Reason to complain of too much Penury. Religion as it serves to the good of all, has a very just Plea to be supported at the Publick Expence; but it ought not to be, nor indeed can it be, supported by Publick Extravagancy. For this weakens the State; and it is evident that in Proportion as the State grows unable to support it self, it must grow unable to support Religion. These are plain Things, and therefore need no longer to be insisted on. I shall only add, That whatever Right the Legislative Power has over the Publick Stock; the same Right it has over all Benefactions, made or given by Private Persons for the Publick Support and Encouragement of Religion. For these having a certain Influence either good or bad upon the whole Community; as they cannot be established at first without the Magistrate's Consent, so they must for the same Reason be subject to his Regulations for ever afterwards.

By these Ways then the Magistrate has a Right to provide for the due Administration of Instruction, in the true Religion. And not only hath he a Right, but it is his Duty, both as the Servant of God, and the Guardian and Protector of the Commonwealth, thus to provide for it, so far as the Exigencies of the State will give him leave. Now this being admitted, it will not I conceive bear being disputed, whether he hath a Right also by the same Methods, equally to provide for the Administration of Instruction in such false Methods of Religion, as may be set up in Opposition to the true. The Proposal is at first Sight ridiculous. For what is it but to ask whether the Magistrate hath not a Right to pull down with one Hand, what he is in Duty bound to build up with another? I speak this of one and the same Magistrate, at the same Time, and in the same Country. For as to different Magistrates, either in the same or in different Dominions, they may be subject to different Rules. No Magistrate (as I have before shewn) can have properly a Right to encourage a False Way of Worship: But, (which, so far as Human Conduct is concerned, will come to the same Thing) every Magistrate is obliged to encourage that

Religion which he believes or judges to be the true; and consequently it must be owned; and has been admitted, that if any Magistrate embraces a false Religion he will be bound to provide that Instruction be administered for the Support of that false Religion, in the same manner as if it were the true. And this is a Caution which I must desire the Reader constantly to bear in his Mind, *viz.* That whensoever I maintain the Magistrate's Right to make Use of any Method for the Support of the true Religion; the Obligation to make Use of the same Method in case Error happens to be received as Truth, is always supposed and taken for granted. Here all the Difficulties center, which attend upon the Question, which 'tis my Design not to avoid; but, so far as I am able, to remove: And the Way to do it, as I observed above, will be to state the Consequences fairly on both Sides, and see on which Side the Advantage lies. How the Account stands as to other Particulars, will be consider'd with Respect to each of them as they come in Course. But as to this, having before remarked it as an evident Truth, that the Consequences which would arise from the Want of Instruction (which in the ordinary State of the World will be prevented no other Way than by these and such like Publick Provisions) are far worse than those which attend the promiscuous Use of Instruction, both for, and against, the Truth: I look upon it to be entirely out of the Reach of the Objection, and consequently have no need to say any more to it here.

THUS much therefore being briefly spoken concerning the first of those Methods by which the Magistrate may support and encourage true Religion; I proceed now to the other two, which consist in the Application of Temporal Motives, *i. e.* of Rewards and Punishments directly and immediately as a Means to curb and restrain Men's Passions, and thereby to provide that the People may attend upon the Instructions of their Teachers, and that such Instructions may obtain their proper Effect. Now to avoid all Ambiguities which may arise from the different Use of Words, it will be proper to acquaint the Reader, that by Punishments I understand all those Administrations by which a Man is molested, hurt, or vexed, in any Matter or Thing, to the free Use and Enjoyment whereof, he hath antecedently a Right or Property either Natural or Civil; whether this Property concerns his Life, his Body, his Liberty, or his Goods. By Rewards on the other Hand, I mean those whereby he is obliged, pleased, or benefited by any Thing, which, without any such antecedent Claim, he enjoys merely through the good Will or Favour of the Donor. Of this latter Sort I reckon Posts of Honour, Profit or Power, under the Supreme Magistrate, which when withholden are very properly termed **NEGATIVE DISCOURAGEMENTS**, because they do not consist in inflicting positive Evils, but only in the withholding some distant Good, which otherwise a Man might have enjoyed. I suppose all this while some Moral Action either good or evil, hurtful or beneficial, pleasing or displeasing, as the Ground or Reason upon which a Man is molested or gratified: And this is what the common Use of Language leads us to suppose. If one Man beats another out of pure Wantonness; He wrongs him indeed, but we do not say he punishes him. And if I give an Alms to a poor Man who stands begging at my Door, you may say that I am charitable if you please, but you cannot say that I reward him.

REWARDS and Punishments therefore, in the Idea of them, always refer back to Merit and Demerit: And the Question is, how far the Adhering to the true established Religion is that Merit in Consideration whereof the Magistrate may reasonably confer special Favours and Privileges: And how far a Departure from, or Opposition to it, is that Demerit which will justify him in molesting his Subjects, by depriving them of any Right either Natural or Civil. To state this Matter clearly, it will be necessary to resolve the whole into distinct Cases. For that which is right in one Case, may not be so in another. I take it for granted that wherever there is a Right to apply Punishments, there is a
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Right also to make Use of Negative Discouragements. For the greater always includes the less; and 'tis certainly more to take away from a Man what is already his own by a proper Right, than merely to deny him something which as yet he hath not; and which to obtain is a Matter of Grace or Favour. Now since there are many Cases in which the Use even of Penal Laws will, I presume, be admitted of without much Difficulty, I shall first mention these Cases; and then come to the Point upon which the Controversy between us and our Opposers, seems principally to depend. And,

I. THE first is the Case of those who, either in Doctrine or in Practice, break in upon the Laws of Natural Religion. Concerning all which Persons, I maintain in general and without Exception, that they may and ought to be chastised and suppressed by any Severity of Penal Laws, that shall be found necessary. The Reasons are obvious. For, 1. Here is a manifest Injury done to the State, which cannot subsist but upon the Principles of Moral Virtue and Honesty. 2. Here is also an Affront offered to God, who having sufficiently promulged the Law of Morality, by that general Reason which he hath given to Mankind; all Violations of that Law (except in those who discover a manifest Want of Understanding, and are therefore not to be considered in the Case) must be supposed to proceed from a Heart estranged from him. Since therefore (as has been shewn) the Nature of the Magistrate's Office leads us to consider him, both as the Guardian of the Publick Civil Good, and as the Protector of God's Honour; it is manifest that upon both these Accounts, he has a Right to punish all Immoral Doctrines and Practices wheresoever he finds them. For the same Reasons I must also maintain,

II. THAT all Violations of the Laws of Revealed Religion whether in Doctrine or in Practice, which are apparently founded in a Contempt of Religion, or arise evidently from vitious and immoral Inclinations and Habits, are Cases punishable by the Civil Magistrate. Manifest and notorious Insincerity seems to be of the same Kind: For whatever Right a Man may have to act according to his Conscience, he has certainly no Right to be a Knave. Nor are these Cases always impossible to be distinguished. For, 1. This is manifestly the Case of those who admit the Revelation as true; and yet either vilify those Doctrines which they profess to believe, or will not conform themselves to that Rule or Law of Life which the Revelation proposes. If a Man who professeth himself a Christian should at any Time blaspheme Christ; or acknowledge himself bound as a Christian to frequent God's Publick Worship, and to partake of the Sacrament, and yet at the same Time live in an habitual Neglect of either or of both; no Man will say that he does not deserve Correction. For either he is sincere in his Profession, or he is not. If he is sincere, he is Self-condemned in acting contrary to his Profession; and if he is not sincere, but professes the established Religion purely for the Sake of some external Advantages; even his Insincerity is a Fault which ought not to be excused. Under this Head we are to place all such as give Publick Evidence of their Enmity to Christianity, whilst at the same Time they regularly frequent the Publick Assemblies of Christians, and (which I tremble to repeat) join in the most solemn and sacred Mysteries of the Gospel. Great Iniquity here is undoubtedly somewhere. If they are Believers, they are the wickedest of Men. If they are not, who can justify their profane Hypocrisy in making a Shew of adoring the Redeemer whom they despise? This is Iniquity even against their own Law, (if indeed they have any Law) the Law of Nature, which doth not admit of Perfidiousness and Lying as in the Presence of the Almighty. One Thing then might be, and ought to be, required of them under the severest Penalties, *viz.* Either that they forbear to profess what they do not believe, or that they cease to affront Him whom they are ashamed openly to deny. As to those who openly disown the established Revealed Religion, we cannot always so certainly pronounce concerning

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them, by what Motives they are influenced. Their Private Conduct may indeed many Times afford Ground for very strong Presumptions: But this being such (for the most part) as Wise Men may better observe, than Magistrates appeal to; it can have little to do in the present Dispute. One Thing however I must not forget to mention, as an evident Token both to the wise and to the unwise, to the Magistrate as well as to the People, of an evil and corrupted Mind; and that is, 2. When Men oppose Points of Revealed Religion not in the Way of modest and sober Reasoning, but by turning them into Ridicule and Drollery. This is a Practice not to be endured in any well-governed Commonwealth, as what both in its Cause, and in its Effects, bears too near an Alliance with Blasphemy and Profaneness. And surely if any Thing can provoke the Divine Justice to abandon a Nation, and to give them up to feed on the Fruits of their own Vanity and Wickedness; it must be when his Honour is so little set by, that Men cannot adjust those Differences which arise among themselves concerning his Worship, with the same Decency and good Manners, that Modesty leads us to observe in settling the common Affairs of Life. The Majesty of God gives a Sanction to every Thing that has any tolerable Pretence to shelter it self under his Authority, so far, at least, as to secure it from being insulted: And there is this Respect due to the Judgment of our Superiors; that if we cannot think them in the Right, we should not treat them as if they were Fools.

By this, the Reader may already conjecture that I am not against allowing free Liberty to the Subject, to question any established Opinion or Doctrine of Revealed Religion, which they shall judge to be false; and to offer their Reasons against it, provided it be done with a fit Temper and in a proper Way. To speak my Mind freely and without Reserve; The Thing is upon all Accounts just and equitable: For the Magistrate being fallible as well as others, he ought not obstinately to shut his Eyes against new and better Light; and 'tis certain that Truth will suffer more when Errors are rejected with too much Stiffness, than when they are brought to a serious and impartial Examination. But still I say, that there is a certain Propriety and Decorum in offering Opinions to the Tryal, which the Magistrate hath an undoubted Right to insist upon. For all Ways are not alike either hurtful or beneficial: And if a Man be but fairly heard, in what Way soever it be that he is heard, he will have no Reason to complain. Wherefore,

III. THERE is one Thing more which I would beg leave to suggest, as a Matter not unworthy the Consideration of our Superiors; and that is whether some Kind of Restraint guarded by Penal Laws ought not to be laid upon ALL Publick Opposers of Revealed Truths, any where established. And the Reason of my asking the Question is, because it appears to me, that Popular Appeals as they are commonly practised, are both wrong in themselves, and in their Consequences more hurtful than beneficial to the Interests of Religion. As to the first, It should seem most agreeable to Decency and good Order, that when any Man thinks, that he has any Thing of Moment to offer towards the reforming what he judges to be amiss; he should first apply himself to the Magistrate, or to some Person or Persons purposely commissioned by him, to receive Appeals of this Nature; and that the Question should be considered in such a Manner as he, or they, should judge to be most expedient. By this Means many needless and frivolous Disputes would be avoided; Many material ones, probably, settled in a more private Way; and Abundance of that Mischief prevented, which naturally and unavoidably attends an unbounded Licence to every Man to vend Crudities of any Sort indifferently to all. Be Errors ever so absurd in themselves, the Poison will find its Way into weak and sickly Constitutions. Wise and good Men expect wise Arguments; but weak ones will satisfy the ignorant, the foolish, and the wickedly disposed. Now to this Evil on the one Hand, I find no Good that can be opposed on the other, unless it be

be the Benefit which may accrue to the Truth from such a Liberty, in Case Error happens to be established in its Room. But with this Objection I have nothing to do. For what I plead for is, not that Popular Appeals should be absolutely forbidden, (which is the only reasonable Ground upon which the Objection can proceed;) But that, where Differences arise concerning any Point of Religion, any where established, the Magistrate ought to have the Liberty of the first Hearing, in Order, if it be possible, to cut off all Necessity of appealing to the Publick; which in a greater Degree or in a less, is ever attended with Inconveniencies. This Limitation perhaps may seem of little Use to us as Matters now stand; and I do not mention it as practicable in our present Circumstances. But if there were in every Establishment, (as in every Establishment there ought to be) a constant Court to receive Complaints of all growing Corruptions in the Doctrine and Practice of Religion, as there are proper Places to complain of all Civil Grievances and Disorders; I make no Doubt but we should soon feel the Advantages of such a Method: And if after this there should be Liberty allowed of appealing to the whole World, by a faithful and honest Representation of the Reasons, and of the Reasons only, on both Sides, in Case Differences could not this Way be brought to an Accommodation; I see not, for my Part, what it is that a reasonable Man could desire more. For here is all the Liberty allowed to Truth, that Truth can want; and this just and equitable Restraint only laid upon Error, that she shall not be suffer'd to forestall the Opinions of Men, nor by a hasty and partial View draw that Esteem to herself, which in a fair Way of reckoning she would be found not to deserve.

WHETHER such a Liberty as this ought to be allowed of, and how far it may be subject to farther Limitations, is a Point which I do not now determine, but which shall be considered by and by. In the mean Time that which has hitherto been advanced under this Head cannot, I think, easily be found Fault with: And he who should complain of such a Method, if once our Governours should think fit to establish it, would affect an Indulgence, which even the tenderest Concern for the Liberty of the Subject will never justify. In Matters of a Civil Nature, the Thing is plain and evident. For what Government can be at Ease, if every one be permitted to talk and write against the Decisions of his Superiors, in what Manner he pleases? To obstruct all Ways which lead to the Removal of Publick Grievances, is the Spirit of Tyranny, which in its Consequences must end in Slavery and Oppression. But to throw all Ways open at once, and to leave every one to chuse that which liketh him best, is on the other Hand the Spirit of Weakness, and as naturally leads to Disorder and Confusion. Let Governours then be apprized of all Evils and Corruptions in the State, whether New or Old. But how? Why by such Ways as they shall judge to be most conducive to the Publick Safety; which certainly will be in a very ill Condition, if the Mob is to be raised about their Ears, whenever any conceited Upstart shall think himself wise enough to mend the Constitution.

As this which I have mentioned is the only Method of keeping up a due Distinction between Superiors and Inferiors; so 'tis a Method which, in a greater Degree or in a less, has ever been observed in all well-constituted Commonwealths. And where, I ask, would be the Harm, or rather what Good might we not expect, if the same Temper were followed in Things which pertain to Religion? What if our Religious News-writers, who deal out their low and wretched Divinity by Scraps, and turn the most serious and weighty Questions concerning God and his Worship, into a Coffee-House Entertainment; what if our forward and busy Pamphleteers, who make Merchandize of the Ignorance and Credulity of the Vulgar, and by their indigested Conceptions in Matters which they understand not, corrupt their Principles and Morals both;

what, I say, if these and such like pestilent Disturbers of the Peace of the World, were laid under a Prohibition, and (one orderly Way of opening and considering all Sorts of Religious Controversies being settled by Publick Authority) Libels against the Church were punished with the same Severity as Libels against the State? Certainly if there be any Thing in the World which Men ought to enter upon with a serious Temper of Mind, and an humble Dependence upon the Divine Grace; it is the considering the Grounds of their Faith, and the chusing for themselves that Religion, which among the great Variety of Religions they see about them, appears to be most agreeable to the Will of God. But is this the Business of a Coffee-House or of a Tavern, when Men come Hot from the Market or from the Exchange; when their Heads are full of their Worldly Concerns; when they are half Asleep or perhaps half Drunk? Is this, I say, a Time when they are to be call'd upon to sit as Judges in the Affairs of their Souls, and their everlasting Salvation? I trust in God we shall once see the Day, when it will be thought proper and seasonable to give some Check to this prevailing Evil. The Mischief which such Liberties bring upon Religion is but too visible in that Growth of Infidelity and Profaneness, which good Men, with Reason enough, lament and complain of in these Days. And I must take Leave to say, that scarce any Thing will excuse the Indulgence of them, but such an unhappy Posture of Affairs, as lays a Necessity upon the Magistrate to wink at many Things, which otherwise would be (as indeed they ought to be) reformed.

You may think perhaps that I am laying an unreasonable Burden upon the Magistrate, and those who act as Ministers under him, whilst I oblige them to attend the Motions of all who may at any Time be disposed to innovate in Matters of Religion. Be not afraid. The Difficulty is not so great as you may imagine. The Case is this; That by the Method which I now propose, all Controversies in Divinity would be entirely removed from the Hands of impertinent and mercenary Scriblers, into the Hands of Men of Sense and Learning; who as they are the only Persons fit to manage such Controversies, so they would in common Decency and for their own Credit sake, forbear to make Appeals, but where the real Weight and Importance of the Cause would justify them in so doing. Small Grievances are better born with, than ancient and standing Customs laid aside: And if the Magistrate would do his Duty in removing great Ones; he would soon find that he might keep the State of Religion in a quiet and easy Posture, with as little Trouble as he manages the common Affairs of State. But ignorant Men, you'll say, have their Scruples as well as the wise and learned. Very true. But there is no Necessity I hope that Ignorant Men should set themselves up either for Divines or Politicians. If their Scruples be of any Weight, they will not want Men of greater Abilities to patronize their Cause. And if they be of so little Consequence, that 'tis not worth while to trouble the Magistrate with them; there will certainly be as little Reason why they should trouble the World.

THESE Cases being resolved, in which (as I conceive) the Use even of Penal Laws will be admitted without much Difficulty; I now proceed to another, which the Last naturally makes Way for, and which leads directly to the main Point in Controversy. And the Case may be thus stated, *viz.*

IV. WHAT if an Appeal being made to the Magistrate, and the Question considered in a proper Way, the Person who makes the Appeal cannot be, or (which is all one) declares he is not, by the Reasons offered, convinced of his Error? There are but three Ways possible in this Case. For the Magistrate may either, 1. Use Force to oblige him to retract his Opinions. Or, 2. He may enjoin him Silence. Or, 3. He may suffer him to publish his Doctrines to the World, and make Converts as he is able. Now if any one would know
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my Judgment concerning the first of these three Methods, I very freely declare that I think it absolutely unlawful. The Magistrate has no Right to oblige any Man (in the Circumstance supposed) to retract his Opinions, even though they be erroneous: And the Reason is plain, *viz.* Because much Evil may be done on the one Side, and no Good can follow on the other. If a Man be constrained by outward Force to retract his Opinion, whilst his Understanding remains unconvinced; he is constrained to act against his Conscience, which is a great Evil. And this may frequently be the Case. Now what Good can be expected from such a Recantation? Plainly none at all. For all the Virtue of a Recantation lies in this, that it takes off the Influence which the Authority of that single Man's Judgment would have upon others: And this indeed it will do, when the Recantation appears to be hearty and sincere. But a disingenuous Recantation (which every forced Recantation will be presumed to be) can have no such Effect. The requiring such a Recantation shews indeed the Magistrate's Opinion, which may be as well made known by other Methods: But the Recantation it self not being the Result of Liberty and Choice, will be no Evidence of what the Sufferer believes or judges. If a Man in such a Case as this should declare himself convinced; the Magistrate might very reasonably require him to make the same Declaration to the World. In this there is no Hardship; and certainly it is but common Justice that when a Man has done an Injury, he should be obliged to make the best Amends he can. But, this Case excepted, to force Men to retract Errors, is a great Hardship not only upon Flesh and Blood, but upon Conscience too, and answers no good End or Purpose which may not as well be secured without it.

THIS Method then being set aside, the Competition will lie only between the other Two, *viz.* Whether the Magistrate ought to suffer such a Man to publish his Opinions, and to make Converts as he is able; or whether he hath a Right to enjoin him Silence. And concerning this Matter, the Reader may thus far have understood my Mind aforehand, that I am inclinable to favour the Side of Liberty. The Reasonableness of this, I conceive, will hardly be questioned, upon Supposition that such Opinions create no Separation from the National Religion. For this shews that in the Judgment of both Parties, the Difference is of little or no Consequence to Religion, and therefore beneath the Magistrate's Concern. But if those who publish false Opinions are, in Virtue of such false Opinions, separated, or do separate themselves, from the National Way of Worship, into some other Way different from it, the Case will require some farther Consideration: And we are brought at last to the main Point in Controversy; Which,

V. CONCERNS those, who (the true Way of Worship being established by Law) set up, or join in, some false Way in Opposition to it. Now that the Reader may the more clearly and distinctly perceive the real Merits of the Cause between us, there are these Things to be noted concerning the State of the Question, *viz.*

1. THAT the Difference between those of the National Religion and those who separate from it, is supposed to relate to Matters of pure Revelation only; that is, either to Points of Christian Faith or of Christian Practice, in Reference to those Laws either of Religious Worship or Religious Discipline, which the Gospel hath superadded to the Law of Nature. For with Respect to Moral Duties there can be no Difference among reasonable Men; and it hath been already shewn, and is on all Hands agreed, that all Immoralities are punishable by the Magistrate. Let it farther be supposed,

2. THAT the Principles in Virtue of which false Ways of Worship are set up in Opposition to the true, are such as have no Tendency to hurt or to o-

vertain Civil Government. For it is certain that all such Religions may be, and ought to be, suppressed upon a Civil Account, *i. e.* for the Sake of Civil Society; the Right of supporting which, cannot be suspended or taken away, by any Scruples of Conscience real or pretended. To make the Case yet clearer; let it also be supposed,

3. THAT no Civil Disorders are occasioned by Differences about Religion. For whenever such Disorders do arise, the Magistrate hath an undoubted Right to suppress them; I will not say, by using Force to remove the Differences which occasion those Disorders (which is seldom necessary;) But, (which will ordinarily be sufficient) by punishing the Disorders themselves, *i. e.* those who are concerned in such Disorders.

THE Question then at last comes to this, *viz.* "What shall the Magistrate do with those, who (for ought that appears to the contrary) having used a reasonable Care to inform and satisfy themselves, and being chargeable with no indecent or improper Ways of questioning established Doctrines, differ from those of the National Religion as to some Points of pure Revelation; and in Virtue of such Difference in Opinion, do, without any Hurt or Prejudice to the State as to its Civil Concerns, set up or join in different Ways of Worship? This, I say, is the Question; and a Question it is (I very freely own) of great Difficulty as well as Importance. It is supposed, you see, in the Case, that Men may honestly differ in their Opinions about Points of Revealed Religion; and this indeed is necessary to be supposed, because otherwise it would admit of no Dispute. For (as the Learned Dean of *Chichester* has observed) "were Religion in general — one plain uniform Thing about which there was no more Room to disagree, than there is about the Law of Reason and Nature in Moral Points; — there would be nothing with Respect to Religion left to the Magistrate, but to use his Power to enforce Obedience." (1) The Reason is plain, *viz.* Because there can be no Hardship in compelling Men to do, what they are obliged to do in Virtue of the Reason and Understanding which God has given them. But the Case is this, That the Knowledge of the Doctrines of Revealed Religion coming to us by another Kind of Evidence, than that whereby we receive the Knowledge of the Doctrines of Natural Religion: What through Weakness of Judgment in some, and what through habitual Prejudices and Prepossessions in others, Men have differed, do differ, and ('tis to be apprehended) always will differ concerning them. But then since the Evidences of Revealed Religion, though not the same with the Evidences of Natural Religion, are yet sufficient to convince; it must also be said (and it is equally true in Fact) that as Men, notwithstanding the best Care, may differ in their Opinions as to such Points: So they may differ for Want of Care, or pretend a Difference where there is none; and consequently may separate from the National Religion, not honestly and with a good Conscience, or because after due Examination they are really persuaded that it is their Duty so to do; but through Idleness or Wantonness, to please their Humours and their Fancies, or (which is worse) to serve some Worldly Ends which they have in View. This is the Foundation of the whole Difficulty that attends upon the Question; and that I may shew you precisely wherein it lies, and withal set before you the true Point which every Magistrate ought to aim at, I must lay down the two following Propositions: That is to say,

(1) Answ. to Lr. p. 6.

PROPOSITION. I.

NO VIOLENCE *ought to be offered to* CONSCIENCE. My Meaning is (for this is the only Sense in which Conscience can be said to suffer Violence) that *no* SUCH COMPULSION *ought to be used to bring Men to profess the National Religion, (even supposing it to be the true Religion) as will be sufficient to lead them (unless they be endued with a more than ordinary Measure of Integrity and Resolution) to act AGAINST Conscience.*

THIS Proposition I am sensible I need not prove to our Adversaries, because it contains Nothing but what they contend for themselves. But for the Sake of those who may think I incline too far on the favourable Side, I shall offer a few Reasons to support it. And,

1. IT must be considered that whatever Authority the Magistrate may be supposed to have to make Laws in Matters of Religion, it is an Authority always subordinate to the Authority of God; and consequently that he can make no Law which shall oblige all Persons, absolutely and without Distinction to join in the National Way of Worship. All that he can in Reason require is, that all should join in the National Way; who, consistently with Conscience, (*i.e.* consistently with that prior and superior Obligation which they are under with Respect to God) are able to join in it; which implies a Liberty granted (if that may be said to be granted which cannot in Justice be denied) to those who are not able, to join in some other Way. Now this seems to me to cut off all Right of Compulsion: For what Right can the Magistrate have to compel those whom he is either supposed not to command, or whom if he does command, he commands without Authority? You will say perhaps that it is true in all Cases, as well as in this, that the Magistrate rules only in Subordination to God; and consequently that in Virtue of this Reasoning it will be unjust to enforce Obedience even to a Civil Law, where there is Room to suppose that Conscience may be concerned, and where Conscience is actually pleaded as a Bar against his Authority. I answer; And so it would if Compulsion were no more needful to support Civil Government, than it is to support Religion. But this cannot be pretended. For if when the Magistrate makes a Law for the Good of the Commonwealth, it should be admitted as a sufficient Excuse for a Man to say, *I cannot obey, It is against my Conscience*; there would at once be an End of his Authority, and all Government must fall to the Ground. Wherefore since a Consent to the End always implies a Consent to the Means necessary to that End; it must be supposed that every Member of the Society as such, has in these Cases submitted his Will to the Will of the Magistrate; so far, I mean, as to have obliged himself either to obey the Law if he can, or to suffer the Penalty, if he cannot. But the Case is otherwise with Respect to Religion: for the Support of which, Compulsion is so far from being necessary, that it is not so much as proper, as I will now shew you. For,

2. FORASMUCH as the same Methods which are allowed to be made Use of to support a true Way of Worship, must as well be allowed to be made Use of to support a false one, in Case it happens to be received as true; This Consideration will bring those who plead for Compulsion as a proper Method, under the whole Weight of the Objection drawn from the Misapplication of Authority, the ill Consequences whereof are with great Reason complained of. I have before laid it down as a Rule, that Power ought not to be put into the Magistrate's Hand, if the Consequences which may ordinarily be apprehended from the Abuse of that Power, be as bad or worse than those which will follow from the Want of it. Pray then consider; what is the Good you propose by Compulsion? It is, say you, the hindering Separations from the true Religion.

gion. Well; This Effect it will undoubtedly have where Truth is established. But then I think withal that this End will in the main, or in a very good Degree, be secured without Compulsion. For supposing the National Religion to be the true Religion; and supposing the Use of all other Methods to bring Men to embrace it: It is not likely that the Number of those who separate from it, will be very considerable; at least we may say with a great deal of Assurance, that it will be incomparably less than the Number of those who (if we may judge of what will be, by what always has been) will be hindered from embracing the Truth, by the Use of the same Method to encourage Falshood. Whence it hath happened that the Professors of false Religions have ever in Point of Number had the Advantage of the Professors of the true, it is not needful for me to inquire. The Fact is plain and undeniable: And in judging concerning Affairs of this Nature, Men should always take their Measures from what they see before their Eyes, rather than from what ought to be, or they could in Reason wish to find. So that, I say, as no Man can so far resign his Will to the Will of the Magistrate, as to leave it to him to determine absolutely what Way of Worship he shall follow; so no Man ought to consent to put such an Authority of executing Penalties into his Hands, as instead of supporting Religion upon the whole, tends to destroy it, by introducing more and greater Mischiefs than it is intended to cure.

THIS Weight then must be allowed to the Objection, that it concludes strongly against all violent compulsive Methods. And this I would have understood not only with Respect to such Differences as may arise between Christians and Christians; but with Respect to those also by which Christians are distinguished from those who are not Christians. You will say perhaps that what Room soever there may be for Men to dispute about some particular Points of Christianity; no Man can sincerely reject the Gospel: And this I freely confess, that supposing proper Abilities to judge, and that the Evidences for it are considered without Prejudice or Partiality, no Man can reject it. But 'tis hard to determine how far Custom, Education, and some odd preconceived Notions which Men innocently enough fall into, may pervert their Understandings: And this too must be remembered, that if none but Christians are to be suffered in a Christian Country; it will follow, that none but Mahometans must be suffer'd in a Mahometan Country; and the Difficulty will remain just the same. I see no Remedy then but that the same Liberty must be allowed to both: And why should we be afraid? Hath our Cause stood the Tryal for so many Hundred Years; and shall we now at last betray a Mistrust, as if it could no longer be defended? Some Mischief will certainly follow from this Liberty among the more weak and corrupted Part of Mankind. But it is better to trust the Issue of this with the good Providence of God; than to have Recourse to a Method of preventing it, which if every where made Use of alike will lay the Foundation for a more general Calamity. I shall conclude this Head with a Passage of the most excellent *Grotius*, who speaking of those who pretend to justify the Use of Severities, from what was commanded with Respect to false Prophets and Seducers under the Jewish Law, hath these Words which contain the main Foundation upon which I build. *Sunt qui sævissima quaque defendunt, Judaica Legis Exemplo. Ut jam nihil dicam de Legis veteris novaque diverso Spiritu, Quos tandem ferit illa Lex? Nimirum eos qui malignissimo Proposito hoc agebant ut Homines ab uno vero Deo abducerent, ab eo, inquam, Deo quem & Natura docebat, & tot Miracula aperte testabantur. At Christiana Religionis pleraque non Naturâ nobis nota sunt, sed Cælesti Patefactione; & Miracula quibus olim ea Religio obsignata est, ad Summam Doctrinæ pertinebant, non ad singula Capita quæ in Controversiam veniunt.——Hæc autem non eo dico Animo, quòd [eos] Judicio eximere velim——qui, mentito Religionis Nomine, Bella excitant, aut Imperii Statum concutiunt.——Sed Facta velim discerni ab Opinionibus ut quæ non*

æque sunt ἐφ' ἡμῶν. (u) That is to say; "There are those who defend the greatest Severities upon the Authority of the Jewish Law. To say nothing here of the different Spirit of the Law and the Gospel, I will only ask whom does that Law concern? Plainly, those only who out of a malicious and wicked Disposition, made it their Business to draw Men off from the Worship of the One true God, of that God, I say, to whom they were directed by the Light of Nature; and whose Authority had been attested by so many Miracles. But the Doctrines of the Christian Religion are many of them not discoverable by Natural Light, but made known to us by Divine Revelation only: And the Miracles by which this Religion was heretofore confirmed, ascertain to us indeed the Truth of the Gospel in general; but they do not determine the Sense of particular Doctrines, which may happen to be controverted among Christians. I speak not this to exempt those from Punishment, who under Pretence of Religion raise Tumults and shake the Constitution of Commonwealths. But I think Actions should be distinguished from mere Opinions, as what are not alike in our own Power." These Words are too plain to admit of any Illustration, and therefore I proceed to my second Proposition; and let it be this,

PROPOSITION II.

ALTHOUGH *no Violence ought to be offered to CONSCIENCE; Yet all POSSIBLE CARE ought to be taken to RESTRAIN LICENTIOUSNESS; i. e. to hinder those from separating from the true National Worship, who either are under NO OBLIGATION from Conscience to separate from it, or who, by an ordinary Care in the Use of proper Means to inform and satisfy themselves, WOULD BE under no such Obligation.*

THIS Proposition needs little Proof. For not to hinder a Thing when it is, or so far as it is, in our Power to hinder it, is to tolerate it: And to tolerate Licentiousness, is to tolerate Something which will do much Hurt under a good Establishment, and no Service under a bad one. The only justifiable Plea for a Separation from the National Religion is Conscience. If therefore those who separate upon a Principle of Conscience, could certainly be known and distinguished from those who separate either without or against Conscience: The Rule to the Magistrate would be this, To tolerate the one, and to punish the other. But since this is impossible, some Expedient must be called in (if such an Expedient can be found) to supply the Defect. And this I say, if there be any such Kind of Restraint as cannot be supposed to affect or hurt a serious Conscience, and yet may be supposed to be helpful towards checking the Wantonness or Wickedness of those, who separate from the National Religion upon Motives in which Conscience hath no Concern: The Magistrate (where no special Reasons to the contrary intervene) hath an undoubted Right to make Use of such Restraint; and that Method which best answers both these Ends is certainly the best Method.

You see now what is the true Point which every Magistrate ought to have in View. And in short it is this; To discriminate between Men of Conscience, and Men of no Conscience, and not to suffer the Right of one to be usurped by the other; the Liberty due to Conscience to be made a Cloak for Licentiousness. Let no Man therefore suffer for Conscience, nor let any Man of Conscience complain if he HAPPENS to suffer in Consequence of such a discriminating Law. Every Man's Right is subject to the Publick Good, and every Man in his Turn has his share of this Burthen. The less any Man of Con-

(u) Annot. in Matt. 13. 41.

science is exposed to suffering by such a Law, the better the Law will be: But to find out exactly where this Medium lies is very difficult, and may be to us perhaps impracticable. We must endeavour however to come as near it as we can, and that I may proceed clearly I shall consider the Question,

FIRST, With a View to NEGATIVE DISCOURAGEMENTS. And,

SECONDLY, With Regard to PENAL LAWS.

FIRST then, Let us consider the Question with a View to NEGATIVE DISCOURAGEMENTS. And as to this Point I say absolutely and without Exception, that *in Order to support and maintain the true NATIONAL RELIGION, the Magistrate hath a Right to EXCLUDE all those who DISSENT or SEPARATE from the NATIONAL RELIGION, from holding any PLACE or OFFICE of TRUST or AUTHORITY under him.* To make good this Assertion, two Things only are necessary, *viz.* 1. To prove that this Method upon the whole and in the Conclusion, tends to the Advantage of Religion; and, 2. To shew that no particular Exceptions lie against the Use of it. To each of these I shall speak distinctly. And,

1. SUPPOSING the Religion encouraged to be the true Religion, the Advantage of this Method is plain and visible: Or if any one doubts, he needs only to go back to what has been observed in the first Chapter of this Discourse. Our Business at present is to handle the Argument in a Comparative Way, *i. e.* to consider what will probably follow in Case this Method be every where made Use of; and see whether those Consequences be such as will make it advisable to lay it aside. I have before observed that the great Objection against all Methods of this Kind is, that they stop the Way to a Reformation where it is wanting: And it is very certain, that something of this Sort will attend every Method of any Kind that is good for any Thing. Even Instruction, as has been shewn, does not stand quite clear of this Evil. For to infuse wrong Principles into Men's Minds must necessarily fill them with Prejudices, which always makes it hard, and many Times impossible for them to be convinced. So that if it be a sufficient Objection against any one Method that it does in some Degree, or with Respect to some Persons, tend to hinder a Reformation where it is wanting, it must be as sufficient against all Methods; and you will be driven at last to this Absurdity, even to say, That there ought to be no Method of encouraging Religion at all.

SOME just Medium then there must be somewhere to be found. And the Way to come at it hath heretofore been shewn to be this, *viz.* To consider what that Method is, which, avoiding the Evil of a total Neglect of Religion in the Magistrate (which is the greatest Evil of all) both tends to support Truth where it is, and leaves the Way open to a Reformation where it is not. I say open, *i. e.* so far open, as that there shall be nothing to hinder on the Part of the Method, but that, under a tolerable State of the World, Truth shall by Degrees, as Men's Prejudices wear off and their Passions cool, most generally prevail. It must be evident to any Man of common Understanding, that whatever Method will have this Effect, it must be a reasonable Method: For the Tendency of such a Method in the End and Conclusion is, to bring on (as the State and Condition of the World will admit of it) a general Establishment of true Religion by Human Laws: And how desirable a Thing that is, no wise and good Man needs to be told. What then is this Method? Why here too I may venture to say, that in general I have shewn it you already. For what other Method can it be than that, which, leaving every serious Man at Liberty to act according to his Conscience, ministers only a Remedy to Lust and Appetite? Under such Liberty as this there will never be wanting Men of
Sense

Sense and Abilities, who will take Pains to beat down popular Errors: And if these Errors be of small Consequence, it will be of as little Consequence whether they be reformed. But if they be gross, they will certainly be seen; and the more they are seen, the more they will lose Credit: And when once they come to be generally exploded, they will as generally be abandoned. I speak this (as I said just now) presuming Mankind to be in a tolerable Condition as to Morality and a general Sense of Religion. For when once it comes to that Pass, that generally speaking Men have lost all Sense of Religion, and entirely given themselves up to Sensuality and Worldly-mindedness; the Case is more than enough evident, that the best Method you can think of will be without Effect. What Remedy would be equal to such a desperate Disease, it is hard to say: But thus much is certain, that it carries not with it so much as the Appearance of a Remedy for the Magistrate to give up all Care of Religion, and to leave every Man without Check or Restraint to do what is Right in his own Eyes.

THUS much then being premised in general, I now apply my self directly to the particular Method under Consideration. And here in the first Place I think it plain beyond Contradiction, that the excluding Dissenters from the National Religion, from all Offices of Trust and Authority under the supreme Magistrate; as it gives a very considerable Check (so far as it goes) to Licentiousness on the one Hand, so it carries with it no Oppression of Conscience on the other. It must be a very tender Conscience indeed, which cannot serve God in Peace and Quietness, unless it be suffered to rest it self upon a Cushion of State. He who is not permitted to reap the Fruits of his own Labour, Skill, and Industry, may have just Reason to complain that he is oppressed. But 'tis absurd to talk of Oppression, when, *sitting undisturbed under his own Vine, and under his own Figtree*; the only Matter of Complaint is this, That he is not *v. g.* Mayor of a Corporation, or a Lord Justice of the Realm; that is to say, when he has every Thing that he can call his own, and is only denied something, which he has no Right to demand.

You will say perhaps, that though here is no Oppression upon the Consciences of those who are excluded from Civil Offices; yet here is a Bribe offer'd to purchase the Conformity of those who are willing to accept them. I answer that though this is very far from being intended by any Good Magistrate; yet in Effect so it often happens: And I will add withal (if this will please you) the Temptation is so great, that, were it possible, it ought not to be laid in the Way of the whole, no nor any considerable Part of the whole Society. If an effective Law could be made that all or the Major Part of those who should conform to the National Religion, should get Estates; I think that such a Law would be unwarrantable: Because tending to destroy all Integrity among Men, it would have almost as bad an Effect upon the general State of Religion throughout the World, as even Persecution it self. But the Number of those who can fill or even hope to fill Offices of Trust, being (as has been said before) exceeding small in Comparison to the whole Body or Society of Men; this very much alters the Case. True it is that here will still be a Temptation to those who are within the Reach of it, to sacrifice their Consciences to their Worldly Interest. But this is therefore no Objection because the Evil is unavoidable. The general Good of Religion I say requires this Method; and if that which contributes to the Publick Advantage, shall be drawn into an Occasion of Private Mischief to some particular Persons, you have had my Answer already, that the Blame lies upon those who are guilty of the Abuse, and that neither the Magistrate nor the Method has any Thing to do in it. Could you separate the Trust from the Emolument, I am very free to declare, that I would have no such Snare laid in the Way of any Man; But since this is impossible, we must be contented

to take Things as we find them, and suffer the Conveniency and the Inconveniency to go together.

BUT I am now wandering from the Point in hand. The Question is, What Good will this Method (supposing it to be every where made Use of) in the End and Conclusion do to Religion? And the Objection is, That though it carries with it no Oppression upon Conscience, yet it offers such a Bribe to Conscience, as, generally speaking, will prevent those who are within the Reach of it, from attempting a Reformation, if the Magistrate happens to be of another Opinion. I own the Charge, and am sensible that this Circumstance in a greater Degree or in a less, will always help to obstruct a Reformation. But I have no Notion that, if this be the only Impediment, it will totally stop the Way to a Reformation: Because I have not observed (and I dare say no Man else has found) that the Influence of a Court and its Dependents, could ever so far stupify the Senses of a Nation, as to cause them not to feel any real Hardship, Religious or Civil. Every Magistrate who understands how to govern, will be careful (so far as is possible) that none be put into Offices of Trust, but such as will support his own Measures of Civil Administration: And if these be such as no honest Man can engage in; 'tis more than an even Chance that he may find Knaves enough that will. But what is this to the Community? If a Post of some Thousands a Year will stop the Mouth of an Ambitious Courtier, the rest of the World who feel the ill Effects of a bad Administration will easily understand that Things are not as they ought to be: Whence else have we heard of general Revolts occasioned by unwarrantable Encroachments upon the Liberties of the Subject? The Reckoning stands just the same in the Affair of Religion. Magistrates may prescribe, but the People will judge as they find Reason, where there is a free Liberty of judging. Whatever they dislike they will certainly complain of; and when once the Complaint grows to be general, the Magistrate will as certainly find it for his Interest to apply a Remedy. In short, since Experience shews us that confining Offices of Trust to Persons well affected to the Government upon a Civil Account, is very consistent with the Removal of Civil Grievances; nothing hinders us from concluding that the confining such Offices to Persons well affected upon a Religious Account, is also very consistent with the Removal of Religious Grievances.

THIS Method then you see comes up exactly to the Standard above laid down: *i. e.* It tends to support Truth where it is encouraged, and will not prevent a Reformation where it is not encouraged; and by Consequence makes Way for a general Establishment of True Religion by Human Laws. Now pray consider what would be the Consequence if (this Method being laid aside) Offices of Trust were bestowed upon all without Distinction, whether they complied with the National Religion or complied with it not: And I am very much deceived or you will find it to be this, That under such a State of the Case you could have no Establishment at all. The Reason is because Persons in Authority through the Concern which they have in executing, and (in some Constitutions) even in making Laws, are always such a Check upon the Magistrate, that unless he secures these to his Interest, it will be impossible for him to pursue any one Point of Government with Steadiness and Resolution. Every one sees and feels this, in Matters of a Civil Nature. And therefore (as I said just now) 'tis a Maxim in Policy which no Man finds Fault with, to provide so far as may be, that the Views both of the Magistrate and of those who act as Ministers under him, be directed exactly the same Way. For otherwise there will be a perpetual clashing and interfering where there ought to be the most perfect Harmony: and whatever Measures the one pursues, the others will be always ready to obstruct. Suppose then some one Way of Worship established by the Magistrate; *i. e.* suppose (which is the least that can be supposed)

supposed) a Provision made by the Magistrate that the Advantage of Publick Instruction shall lie in Favour of that one Way, which those who act as Ministers under him either generally, or (which upon this Foot may sometimes happen) universally judge to be wrong. The Consequence is plain, that either he will be obliged to consent to repeal those Provisional Laws, and to make new ones in Favour of some other Religion; or he must be contented to be served by those who will not like him, *i. e.* by those whom he cannot trust. And let any one judge whether in such a State of the Case as this, it would not be far more adviseable for the Magistrate to throw up all Care of Religion, and to declare at once that he would make no Provision for one Way more than for another, than to be continually exposed to those Hazards and Vexations, which the Struglings of different and contrary Factions must necessarily introduce. If you should call the Case home to ourselves, and say, that the having a Vote to chuse Persons to serve in Parliament, is having an Interest in the Legislature; and that therefore it will follow in Virtue of this Reasoning, that even this Liberty ought to be taken from Dissenters: My Answer is, That I care not how far this Reasoning goes, provided it goes but right. They who see this Consequence may examine it at Leisure: And it seems to me to be much easier to see the Consequence, than to prove it to be an Unreasonable one. Wherefore,

2. THUS much being said to shew that this Method, if every where made Use of, would in the End and Conclusion turn to the Advantage of true Religion; I come now to consider what particular Exceptions lie against the Use of it. And here his Lordship tells us in general that all the Members of Civil Society have (x) a NATURAL RIGHT, *to the CAPACITY of serving their Country in OFFICES of TRUST, till they have forfeited it by Professions or Practices directly and absolutely inconsistent with their Countries Safety.* Before we can judge of the Truth of this Assertion, it will be very requisite to make Sense of it, which it scarce is as it now stands. For besides that it is absurd to talk of a Natural Right to that which results merely from Civil Institution, and hath no Existence out of a Commonwealth: It is evident that a Capacity to serve one's Country in an Office of Trust, implies divers Qualifications which are not the Object of Right either Natural or Civil. Thus, for Instance, a Capacity to serve one's Country in the Office of a Judge, implies the Qualifications of Wisdom, Learning, and Integrity: But does any one understand so little Language as to say that a Man has a Right to be either Wise, or Learned, or Upright? Again; What have directly and absolutely to do here? Is it not enough to disqualify a Man for an Office of Trust, that he is guilty of Professions or Practices inconsistent with his Countries Safety, whether they be so directly or indirectly, absolutely or not absolutely? — But I will not stay to contend about Words, provided I can but understand the Thing. And therefore, presupposing the Natural and Moral Endowments of Men, and all other Matters necessary to be presupposed; we will consider the Assertion only as it relates to mere Differences about Religion. You must have observed already that it is not said, that all the Members of Civil Society have a Right to the actual holding or enjoying Offices of Trust. This had been too gross an Absurdity. But some Right or other was resolved upon; and therefore it is maintain'd that they have a Right to the Capacity of enjoying them, or to the Capacity of being chosen to hold such Offices. We must see then more distinctly what this Capacity means, and how this Right can be supported. And in Order to this it will be proper to shew, how the Case stands under absolute Monarchies, where the supreme Legislative and the supreme Executive Power subsists in one and the same Person; for this will lead us clearly to discover how it stands also in Mixt

(x) Answ. to the Committee, p. 184.

Governments, where those two Branches of the supreme Authority are lodged in different Hands.

SUPPOSE then in the first Place an Absolute Monarchy. The Assertion is, that under such a Form of Government, all the Members of the Society have a Right to a Capacity of serving the Magistrate in Offices of Trust, till they have forfeited it by Professions or Practices inconsistent with their Countries Safety, *i. e.* (for this is what they mean) inconsistent with their Countries Safety, considered merely as a Civil Society. By a Right to a Capacity, here I presume we are not to understand a Right to hold such Offices if the Magistrate thinks fit to bestow them: For this is just such a Right as I have to a Hundred Pounds in your Pocket. I have a Right to make Use of it, if you are disposed to give it me. The Meaning therefore is, That every Subject hath a Right to be consider'd by the Magistrate as a fit Person to be employed in Offices of Trust, if there be no other Objection against him besides his Opinions in Religion: Or in other Words, that the Magistrate hath no Right to refuse admitting any Man to hold an Office of Trust, purely because he dissents or separates from the National Way of Worship. This is the Notion, which we are told, is *as old as Truth and Reason themselves*; a Thing which a Man may say with great Ease to himself as often as he has a Mind to it. But to prove it, is hard, and (as I conceive) impossible. It is usually said on this Occasion, that because such Offices are the Favours of the Magistrate; therefore he may dispose of them upon what Conditions or Considerations he pleases: Which I do not think to be exactly right. They are Favours, 'tis true: But then he is to consider these Favours as a Trust put into his Hands by the Society for the common Good: And consequently in the Disposal of them he ought always to have a Regard to some Publick End, in which his Office is properly concerned. If the Magistrate should refuse to make a Man Lord Treasurer only because he has a Wide Mouth or a Roman Nose; this would be an Act of Injustice both to him and to the Publick. For what hath the Magistrate to do with Mens Mouths or with their Noses? Or of what Advantage is it to the Publick, whether a Person in Authority hath good Features or whether he hath bad ones? But there is Justice in debarring a Man such an Office, because he is disaffected, or because he is a Knave. And why? Why because there is all the Reason in the World to believe, that he would be false to his Trust, and employ that Power which he acquires in Virtue of that Office, not for, but against, the Publick Interest. Now 'tis but supposing (what our Adversaries indeed constantly deny, but which I hope I have sufficiently proved) that it belongs to the Magistrate's Office to take Care of Religion; and the Work is done at once. For if it be right in the Magistrate to exclude a Person obnoxious upon a Civil Account, because the Civil Good is his Care; it must be as right in him to exclude a Person obnoxious upon a Religious Account, because Religion is his Care. The Reason is exactly the same in both Cases: And in all Cases it will be found true, that whatever it be, which the Magistrate by his Office is bound to preserve, he ought to put it in no Man's Power to hurt or to destroy.

FROM hence then it is evident that there is no Period of Time assignable in any well constituted Commonwealth, in which it can be said, that every Subject has such a Right as our Adversaries contend for. But if it were possible to assign such a Period; this would not help them, unless they could prove this Right to be unalienable. Now this is what I would desire to know of these Reasoners. Are not all Rights, Natural or not Natural, limitable by the Supreme Power for Reasons which concern the Good of the Society? Though the Thing is plain of it self as flowing from the very Notion of a Commonwealth, yet I will give an Instance or two to explain it. It was an Ancient Privilege of all Free-holders in *England* who were qualified to give a
Vote,

Vote, to be capable of being chosen Representatives in Parliament. Nevertheless this Privilege has by Authority been lately confined to those who have so many Hundred Pounds a Year. Again; It is a Natural Law that all the Products of the Creation, in which no Man's Labour or Expence has given him a special Property, are common. Yet our Game-Laws have restrained this Right, and limited the Use of certain Beasts and Fowl, to Persons of such an Estate. Now if all this be justifiable, (which no Man questions) how comes it to pass that Limitations of Men's Right, made for the Sake or on the Account of Religion, should be unjustifiable? Is it of less Consequence, think you, Who serves God in the Way he has prescribed, than it is, Who is elected to serve the Interests of a County or of a Corporation? Is it a less Evil in it self to dishonour him and his Laws, than it is to kill a Pheasant or a Hare? Is there Sense that some should take away the Rights of others, for their Gain or for their Diversion; and none that they should do the same Thing for a much better End, the securing Virtue and Piety? I know the utmost of your Answer. The Magistrate, say you, has nothing to do with Religion. And I say, shew it me. If you can, your Notion, I own, will want no farther Support: If you cannot, it is impossible it should be supported.

WE have hitherto supposed the Form of Government to be absolutely Monarchical. Let us now put the Case of a mixt Government, and suppose that the supreme Legislative, and supreme Executive Power, are put into different Hands. Here the Distinction between the actual holding Offices of Trust, and the Capacity to hold them will be still more clear, if it be supposed (which is really the Case among ourselves) that the supreme Executive Power, in whose Hands the Right of disposing such Offices is lodged, is tyed down by an express and positive Act of the supreme Legislative Power, not to bestow them but upon Persons so or so qualified. For then none will be under a Capacity of holding such Offices, but they who come within the Limits prescribed by the Legislative Power. But though this Case sets the Meaning of the Assertion in a clearer Light, it does not in the least affect the Issue of the Dispute. For the Right of the supreme Legislative Power (where it is not limited by any special Fundamental Laws) is the same under all Forms of Government: And consequently if it has a Right to deny Offices of Trust to Dissenters from the National Religion under an absolute Monarchy; it must have a Right to bind the supreme Executive Power to do the same under a limited Monarchy. This brings the Point quite Home to ourselves: And you may now observe, that amidst all the Stir that has been made of late about the Natural Right of every Subject to a Capacity to hold Offices of Trust, the Notion has nothing else to stand upon but this (as I beg leave to call it) most false Presumption, that it is no Part of the Magistrate's Office to take Care of Religion. And in one Word, if this Principle can be shewn not to be false, *i. e.* if it can be proved that the Office of the Magistrate in its original Design and Institution relates to mere Civil Good, exclusive of the Ends of Religion; I will give up all the rest without any farther Controversy. But whilst the Foundation remains unshaken, the Superstructure, I think, cannot fail: And therefore here I shall leave the Matter to rest, till some new and better Reasons be offered on the other Side. In the mean while, if any one has a Mind to see more concerning the Lawfulness and Necessity of this Method, consider'd with a particular View to our own Constitution, I must recommend him to the learned *Dean of Chichester's* Vindication of the *Corporation* and *Test* Acts, where the Case is resolved with so much true Judgment, that it would be an excusable Vanity in me to pretend to add any thing to it by Way of Improvement.

HAVING now consider'd the Question as it relates to NEGATIVE DISCOURAGEMENTS; I proceed to consider it,

SECONDLY, With Regard to PENAL LAWS: And my Opinion is that all Laws of this Sort which inflict either Death, or Torture, or Banishment, or Imprisonment, ought in this Case to be laid aside. Because (setting aside other Reasons which are peculiar to some, there is this Reason common to them all, *viz.* that) the Severity of the Laws being such, as considering the Weakness of Flesh and Blood, very few will be able to resist; The Use of them must contradict the first Rule, That NO VIOLENCE *ought to be offered to CONSCIENCE*; and they are not Methods of Discrimination, but of Destruction. But then as to PECUNIARY MULCTS I do not think that they ought wholly and absolutely to be discarded: Because they are capable of being so temper'd as to the Degree and Measure of them, that whilst they offer no Violence to Conscience, they shall yet very much help to restrain Licentiousness; which (as has been shewn) is the true Medium that the Magistrate ought to aim at. Under this Head then I lay down the following Position, *viz.* That SUCH PECUNIARY MULCTS *as will be both the TRYAL and the INDULGENCE of the SINCERITY of Men, i. e. such as will prevail upon no serious and sober Person, to JOIN in the NATIONAL Way of Worship AGAINST his CONSCIENCE; and at the same time will, in a greater Degree, or in a less, be sufficient to HINDER those from SEPARATING, whom NO REAL SCRUPLE of Conscience OBLIGES so to do; may LAWFULLY be imposed by the CIVIL MAGISTRATE.* How Pecuniary Mulcts may be thus moderated, and of what Service they would be to Religion, shall in the first Place be explained: And then (as in the preceeding Case) I shall endeavour to justify the Use of them, from such particular Exceptions as may seem to lie against it.

I. THEN; That such a Temper with Respect to Pecuniary Mulcts, as I am now speaking of, may be found, must be visible to any Man of ordinary Apprehension. For though it be impossible to assign that Method, which, saving harmless all good Men, shall be sufficient to controul all bad ones: Yet it is very easy to discern that there may be a Method which shall effectually curb the Passions of Many, whilst at the same Time it leaves a just Liberty to All. There was a Law once in Force among ourselves by which it was provided, that every one who absented himself from his Parish Church should pay Twelve-pence a Sunday. This Law as it stood might be liable to many Exceptions, and this was certainly a very great one, that it had no Regard to the Diversity of Men's Circumstances, which is many Times so great, that one shall be oppressed by paying a Sum, which another will hardly feel. What is Twelve-pence a Sunday to a Gentleman of many Thousands a Year? And what is it not to the poor Wretch who cannot earn a Penny more than is necessary to buy Bread for Himself and Family? But let us suppose a Law made to this or some such Effect, That every Person who does not think fit to conform to the National Religion, should be obliged to enter his Name in some Publick Register; and that so many Pounds as he is rated to the King, so many Sixpences (or any other Sum you like better) he should pay yearly as a Tribute for his Liberty. Let this I say be supposed, or any other Law of the same Sort, and I will then ask what Kind of Conscience that must be which will permit a Man to act against his own Sense and Conviction, rather than to pay the Fortieth Part of what he is worth? Plainly so bad a one as not to be worth the owning, and therefore not worth the Magistrate's regarding; who will have little to do if he must never make a Law, till he can be sure that it will minister no Occasion of Wickedness to Covetous and Worldly-minded Men. But if a Man of common Honesty would chuse to give up so small a Portion of his Substance, rather than offend his Conscience; a Man of common Sense and Discretion would not wantonly throw it away, which yet would be the Case of those who should chuse to part with it, when there is a Possibility of keeping that and a good Conscience together.

THIS Method might be (as indeed it ought to be) made to extend to all the Members of the Society in general; to the low as well as to the high; to the poor as well as to the rich. As Gentlemen should be taxed according to their Estates; so Tradesmen (as it is usual in other Cases) should be taxed according to their Stocks, and Labourers and Servants according to their Wages: Only with Respect to the two last Sort, it might be reasonable perhaps somewhat to lower the Proportion. To say the Truth, there may be other Rules of adjusting the Proportion thought of, which may answer the Purpose much better than that which I have mentioned. The Burden should always be heavy enough to be felt; but never so heavy as to crush or overwhelm. But I do not here aim at the Exactness of a Lawgiver who is going to put the Method in Execution: I am only endeavouring to give the Reader a general Idea of the Practicableness of it. And this I am persuaded that however the Licentious, who are impatient of Contradiction, may dislike it, no serious and good Man will find any just Reason to complain. A Man has a Mind, we will say, to leave his Parish Church and go to a Conventicle. The Law allows it him, paying only such a Composition for his Liberty. Will not this (supposing him to make a Conscience of what he does) put him upon considering whether the Reasons which lead him to separate, be of sufficient Weight to balance the Inconveniency which attends upon a Separation? 'Tis plain it will. Well; Let him consider, and the more the better. For where Truth is concerned, the more a Man considers (supposing his Sense to be equal to his Honesty) the better he will like it. Now if this happens to be the Case, *i. e.* if upon mature Deliberation the Man sees Reason to be reconciled to the established Religion; there is this Good obtained, that a wavering Mind is confirmed in a good Way. But if it happens otherwise, there will be no Harm done on the other Side; it being supposed that the Inconveniency which attends upon a Separation, is not so great as to lead any Man of common Honesty to conform against his Will. The Consequence then of such a Method would be plainly this, That all those loose and floating Christians, who understand and consider little, but mean well; and without any formed or settled Principle of Conscience, are (like so many Motes and Straws) swept in by the mere Eddy of a Faction; That these, I say, would be kept fast within the Bosom of the Church, and the Separation confined, in a good Degree, (where it ought to be confined, and where the Law intends it should be confined,) to Consciences truly Scrupulous; *i. e.* to those who resort to Conventicles, not merely because it is their Pleasure, but because they have Reasons weighty to themselves for so doing. The Number of this latter Sort, some, I know, are wont to magnify. But, so far as ever I could observe, they are by far the least among Dissenters of all Sorts and Denominations. "I have no Objection (say they) " against the Church of *England*. 'Tis a safe and good Way for " ought I know. But I like the Meetings better; and why may not I make " Use of that Liberty which the Law allows me?" Seldom shall you meet with a better Excuse for Separation than this, among the common Sort. And pray tell me seriously; Can you believe that if a Man in good Circumstances were obliged to pay as much for his Scruples, as it would cost him to keep a Horse, or to defray the Charges of an ordinary Poor's-Rate; and a Labourer or a Servant no more than what he can afford to spend Yearly at Foot-ball Matches, Wakes, and such like idle Diversions: Can you believe, I say, were this the Case, that there would be so many, who would think it worth the while to dispute, whether in receiving the Holy Sacrament, a Man ought to kneel or to stand; Whether the Minister when he officiates should wear a white Garment or a black one; Or whether it is best to read his Prayers and Sermon, or to say them by Heart? Assure your self that these and such like Differences would (if not wholly cease) at least give but little Disturbance. For whatever there be in these Things, at which weak Men may sometimes stumble, it must be plain to any Man of common Observation, that when any

considerable Party is formed upon such Distinctions, it must owe its Support in a great Measure to the Giddiness of the Multitude; who having no Ballast within, nor any Check from without, are easily led this Way or that Way, *by the Sleight of Men, and cunning Craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

You will object perhaps that I am all this while talking against Experience: For that Dissenters do now pay as much, perhaps, as, according to my Proposal, it is reasonable and fitting for them to pay, *i. e.* as much as can be spared without Oppression. All Publick Societies must be supported at Publick Charges: And is it nothing to provide Houses for the Publick Worship of God, and a Maintenance for their Congregational Teachers? I answer; that how great soever these Expences may be supposed to be, thus much is obvious and undeniable, that they lie heaviest where the Weight of them is least felt, *i. e.* upon the wealthiest of the Party who have more Money, (though perhaps not always more Conscience) than their Followers. If it be supposed that these make up a tenth Part of the whole Body; it will be no wide Calculation if we say that of the nine Parts remaining, there is ordinarily one Half that pays nothing, and another next to nothing. What may a Congregation consisting of two Hundred Souls, be supposed to raise Yearly for the Maintenance of its Pastor? Why if we take one with another, we shall be bountiful, I suppose, if we allow a Hundred Pounds. Admit then that out of these two Hundred, there are Twenty who pay at the rate of four Pounds a Year, and then see how much will remain to be divided among the rest. But not to pretend to any exact Computation, (which it may be impossible to come at) I would only put this Question to any reasonable Man; *viz.* Whether amidst all the Bustle that is made about greater Purity of Worship among the Dissenters, there are not Multitudes of them who if they would consider the Matter with any tolerable Care, would find the Difference to be so inconsiderable that they would make it their Choice rather to conform, than to put themselves to any sensible Inconveniency for the Sake of their Liberty. Whatever Reasons there are (and many there are) to persuade a Man to believe this; they are so many Arguments to shew the Usefulness of this Method, which will be either more or less effectual, in Proportion as the Number of such Men is either lesser or greater. Nor let it be asked what Advantage will the Church receive by the Addition of such indifferent Members to her Communion: For they are supposed to be indifferent, not with Respect to Religion or Christianity in general, but with Respect to the Diversity which there is between the two Ways of Worship; which Indifferency will not in the least hurt them as Christians, though it alters their Measures as to Conformity or Non-conformity. If a Man upon Reasons which he hath never well considered, but which he supposes or believes to have Weight, goes to a Meeting: He will be the better Christian if he comes to Church, because upon Consideration he finds that they have none. And if another who, believing one Way to be as good as another, (which is the Case of many,) separates only to please his Fancy, to indulge his Curiosity, because he has been bred up that Way, or through any other little Considerations which may be sufficient to cast the Ballance when the Mind is equally poised on both Sides; it will not be said I hope that his Conformity makes him ever the worse. Nor, finally, when you have supposed the worst that can be supposed; can it be pretended that it is of no Consequence, to put an End to outward Differences and Distinctions; which by occasioning a Breach of Charity, causes Men, whilst they are contending about Shadows, to lose the Substance of Religion and Godliness.

WELL then; Let it be so, you'll say, that this Method tends to the Advancement of true Religion, where true Religion happens to be encouraged. Still 'tis allowed that the same Method ought to be pursued where Error is encouraged;

encouraged; and pray see what will be the Consequence then. Be not disheartened; The Consequence will not hurt you. That which this Method directly proposes is this; That, so far as is possible, none should separate from the Religion of their Country, but those who upon sober and serious Reflection with themselves, think it their Duty so to do: Which Rule if it were every where observed as well under bad Establishments, as under good ones, the World would be considerably the better for it. To consider seriously, and to judge warily, are Things which can never hurt the Truth; but the Want of them will: And though 'tis certain that some present Inconveniencies may arise from the Use of this Method, in those Countries where Error is established, (which as I said before, is the Case of every Method which hath any Virtue or Efficacy) yet that these are such as will stop the Way to a Reformation, or any Thing like it, is what I utterly deny. Let us consider this Matter a little carefully. The Competition at present lies only between Moderate, Pecuniary Mulcts, and an absolute Indulgence. To find out the true Difference therefore, due Instruction ought alike to be supposed on both Sides. Now this I say; If the whole World were to agree in the Use of such Pecuniary Mulcts, all who are capable to receive the Benefit of Instruction, and are not lost to all Sense of Religion, would (for ought that there is in this Method to hinder) as to all material Points at least, worship God in that one Way wherein he ought to be worshipped. For why? The Evidence of Truth is by Instruction supposed to be made plain to the Understanding; and here is nothing to prevent the Judgment and Conscience from going together. Where Truth is encouraged, there the Advantages of this World will lie on the Side of Conscience; and even where 'tis discouraged, there is no Danger to be apprehended; because the Discouragement is supposed not to be so great as to lay any Force upon Conscience. All that can be said is; That weak Men who cannot judge, careless Men who will not judge, And wicked Men who either will not judge, or will not act according to what they judge, will generally fall in with the National Religion whatever it be. But this can be no Objection: For as to careless and wicked Men, (whilst they are such) they have no Presence to be reckoned in the Account. As they profess the National Religion merely because it is the National Religion: So if there were no National Religion, they would profess none. Either Way they are Men (properly speaking) of no Religion: And when Men have no Religion, their Presence cannot add to, nor their Absence diminish from, the Number of Religious Men. And as to the weak and injudicious, it is my Opinion that in general they will be as safe at least under the Direction of the Magistrate, as they would be under the Influence of their own Humours and Fancies, and the Practices of those artful designing Men, who for vile and mercenary Ends may be disposed to beguile and seduce them. But with Respect to this Sort of Men, there is one Thing more to be said, which is, That since the weak are always governed by the strong, and Men of little Sense the Property (as it were) of those who have much; To secure the former, there is no Need of any Thing more than to take Care of the latter, who, when once they come to feel the Necessity of a Reformation, will draw the rest after them without much Difficulty.

I SHOULD hope that by this Time enough has been said to convince any reasonable Man of the Usefulness of this Method. What remains is,

2. To consider what particular Exceptions lie against it. There are but Two that I can think to be of Weight sufficient to deserve the Reader's Attention: These therefore, and these only, I shall distinctly speak to.

EXCEPTION I.

IT may be said then, that *this Method proposes that PECUNIARY MULCTS be imposed upon those who SEPARATE from the NATIONAL Religion upon some REAL SCRUPLE of CONSCIENCE. But such Men are guilty of NO FAULT; and where there is NO FAULT, even the lowest Degree of PUNISHMENT is unjust.*

THIS Reason was of great Weight with Mr. Locke, and deserves to be considered. I answer, therefore,

1. By admitting what the Objection supposes, *viz.* That those who separate from the true National Religion honestly and with a good Conscience, are guilty of no Fault. Here is none against God, because they are supposed to act according to their Consciences, after due Care to inform themselves: Here is none against the Magistrate, who hath no Authority to bind Men against their Consciences. It is not essential to the Notion of an Establishment, that the Magistrate even makes a Law, commanding his Subjects to worship God in one particular Way. It is enough that he shews what Way he approves, and makes a Publick Provision for its Defence and Security above all others. But if there were such a Law made, the Meaning of it could be only to enjoin all to comply with it who can; which (as I said before) implies an Exception to those who cannot. Now where there is a Liberty granted, there can certainly be no Fault in making Use of that Liberty. Wherefore,

2. THE Point comes to this, *viz.* Whether in Order to justify the Magistrate in levying Pecuniary Mulcts, it be always necessary to suppose a Fault; and to me it is very evident that it is not. The Case is undeniably plain, 1. With Respect to all such Laws as are termed purely Penal; *i. e.* with Respect to those Laws where the Intention of the Legislator is equally answered, whether you submit to the Law, or pay the Penalty. If the Magistrate should make a Law that every Man of such an Estate that would not serve in the War, should pay Ten Pounds: Would you say that he who should chuse to pay the Ten Pounds would be guilty of a Fault? Certainly not. And the Reason is plain, *viz.* Because by the very Nature of the Law, it appears that the Magistrate leaves him at Liberty to do either the one or the other; and consequently the Will of the Magistrate will either Way be equally obeyed. This comes up exactly to the Case in hand. The Magistrate orders, we will say, that every one of such Circumstances who will not go to Church, shall pay Twenty Shillings. A Man pays the Twenty Shillings and goes to a Meeting. Where is the Fault? Why no where; because here is the same Liberty given as before. But what Justice, you will ask, is there in this latter Case? Why just as much as there is in the former. The Reasons of the Law are not the same in both Cases, but they are sufficient in both. In the one Case, the Magistrate demands Money to purchase so much Power to the Government, which every Subject in Proportion to the Interest he has in it, is bound to support. In the other, Money is demanded, to set a Guard about a Liberty, which though every Man has a Right to make Use of, yet no Man has or can have a Right to abuse. The Case is also clear, 2. With Respect to ALL Laws made for the Publick Civil Good, which happen to interfere with the Consciences of particular Persons. Instead of a discretionary Law, let us suppose the Magistrate to issue out a peremptory Edict, commanding such and so many of his Subjects to go to War, upon Pain of Banishment or Confiscation of Goods. Some of them, believing in their Consciences the War to be unjust, refuse to go. I ask now, are these Persons guilty of a Fault, or are they not? It is not at all material to inquire here, whether the War be really just or unjust; nor yet whether this be a

Case

Case in which Private Persons have a Right to judge: We will suppose, if you please, both that they have no Right to judge, and that they judge wrong; Still they are supposed to act according to the best of their Knowledge; They think they ought to judge, and according to the truest Judgment they can make, they are persuaded that by obeying the Magistrate, they should offend God. What say you? Guilty or not Guilty? Not Guilty say I. For wherever there is a Fault, there must be some Law transgressed. And what is a Law? Not surely a mere Command. For you may command me to run my Head against a Wall: But this is no Law; because you have no Authority to command it. A Law then is a Command with Authority: And this is what Bishop *Sander-son* means when he defines it, *Regula agendi Subdito a Superiore POTESTATEM HABENTE imposita*. The Law then being founded in Authority, where the Authority ends, the Law must end too: And the Authority of Man must ever have an End when it comes to stand in Competition with the Authority of God. It remains then that here is an Edict, which, considered merely as an Edict or Command, reaches indeed to all: But which as a Law or Authoritative Command, reaches to those only who can in Conscience comply with it. Hath now the Magistrate a Right to execute the Penalty upon those who refuse to comply or hath he not? Doubtless you will say he has; because otherwise there will be an End of all Government. But whoever says this, acknowledgeth thereby that there may be a Right to inflict Penalties upon those who are guilty of no Fault: Or in other Words, that in Order to justify the Magistrate in inflicting Penalties, a Fault is not always necessary to be supposed. Wherefore,

3. IN Order to get quite clear of the Objection, we have only to consider, whether the Reason which justifies the Magistrate in this Case, will not justify him also in the Case before us; of which I think there is little Room to doubt or deliberate. For the Reason which justifies the Magistrate in enforcing Laws made for the Publick Civil Good by Penal Sanctions, is (as I before said) a Presumption that every Member of the Society has in these Cases obliged himself either to obey the Law, or to submit to the Penalty: And there is certainly as much a Right of Presumption in the one Case, as there is in the other. The Magistrate must always be understood to have a Right to consider Men as consenting to every Thing, to which wise and reasonable Men ought to consent, for the Good of the whole: And what reasonable Man can refuse to consent to put himself to a small Inconveniency, if thereby he may in any good Degree be instrumental in promoting the Honour of God, and the everlasting Interest of his Fellow-Creatures? That wise and reasonable Men should consent to the Use of oppressive Methods to support Religion, cannot be supposed for Reasons that have afore been mentioned. But that they should have consented to the Use of such a Method as can be no heavy Burden upon any that mean honestly, is what may, yea, what must, be supposed for Reasons which I hope I need not mention, and which it would be even a Shame in any Man to dispute. A Variety of Instances are to be given, in which wise and good Men think it right to oblige themselves to pay certain yearly Sums for the promoting Religion and Piety. And though in many Cases it would be a great Hardship, if, what a Man is disposed charitably to give, should be demanded of him by Law: Yet thus much is certain, that, since it is on all Hands admitted that something of this Sort ought to be done, every Man must be supposed to consent that the Magistrate should do so much as he finds reasonable and fitting to be done, in a Publick Way. If there were a Law that as the Rich in every Parish are bound to provide their Poor with Food and Raiment, so they should be obliged to provide them with suitable Instruction also; I think it would be the most righteous Law in the World. That which justifies it is this, That though Mens Charity neither ought to be, nor indeed can be, determined by Law; yet that the Magistrate hath always such a Right

over the Purses of his Subjects, as will enable him to assign a reasonable Share or Proportion of their Substance, to serve any useful End of Society, of which Religion has been shewn to be one. Now pray tell me; What is paying a moderate Sum as a Composition for Liberty to separate from the true National Religion, when through the unavoidable Errors of Conscience we are unable to comply with it, more than paying so much Money for the Service of Religion? It is doubtless in the main and upon the whole for the Good of Religion, that every Man should be suffered to worship God in that Way, in which he thinks he ought to be worshipped. This Liberty therefore is allowed you. But that Men should separate from the true Way of Worship when their Consciences lay them under no Necessity of doing it, is not for the Good of Religion: This therefore is a Liberty which neither is, nor ought to be allowed. What then do we expect? Why that You, who unhappily are the Occasion of obliging the Magistrate to grant a Liberty for the Good of Religion, may YOURSELVES (so far as may be, and at a very moderate Expence) become the Instruments of preventing this Liberty from being abused to the Hurt of Religion. Do you agree to it, or do you not? If you do, I have the Thing I want; But if you do not, you may pretend to Conscience as much as you please: But, in plain Terms, 'tis a very shrewd Sign that you have none.

THUS at last we are (and very safely I hope) got through the first Difficulty, of which, if those who propose it, had consider'd more, there would have been no Need to have said so much. The only Thing which puzzles the Question is the equivocal Use of the Words Fault and Punishment; which in some Sense are always relative the one to the other, and in some Sense not. If by a Fault you understand something which is strictly Criminal, *i. e.* morally Evil with Respect to some Law Human or Divine; 'tis plain from the Instances above, that Punishment doth not necessarily presuppose a Fault. But if by a Fault you mean merely the Transgression of a Command exclusive of the Morality and Immorality of it, then Punishment will imply a Fault. For Men are never said to be punished but for doing something which they are forbidden to do, or for not doing something which they are commanded to do. If a King levies Money upon his Subjects for the Publick Use: this is called a Tax or Tribute, but never a Penalty. The Reason is because here is no previous Law for the Transgression of which such Money is demanded. But if he makes a Law commanding them to mend the High-ways, to repair Publick Buildings and the like, and fixes a Sum to be raised upon Defaulters; this is call'd a Penalty, and not a Tax or Tribute, for a contrary Reason. The Case of Discretionary Laws may perhaps stand as an Exception to this general Rule. For (as in the Instance before mentioned) though a Law enjoining that those who will not serve in the War shall pay Ten Pounds, does not properly imply a Command to serve in the War; yet I conceive that the Money levied upon those who should refuse to serve, would (through the Affinity of the Thing) be termed a Penalty. Nevertheless, since this is of the same Nature with those Pecuniary Mulcts, which might be laid upon Dissenters as a Composition for their Liberty, they ought rather, I think, to be called both by the same Name. Strictly speaking, they are neither of them Penalties; nor should I therefore have mentioned these Pecuniary Mulcts under the Head of Penal Laws, but that I knew not where so conveniently to place them. But if any one will say that they are Penalties, I shall not contend, provided he does not make it the ground of an Argument; nor raise such Conclusions upon the mere Force of a Word, as (I have shewn I hope) are not to be justified. To proceed then to the next Exception.

EXCEPTION II.

IT may be objected farther; That *the granting to the Magistrate such a Power as I now contend for, is putting a Power into his Hands which will be very apt to be abused, and may be attended with bad Consequences.* For the Power contended for, is not a Power to impose PECUNIARY MULCTS of ANY Sort, but a Power to impose MODERATE pecuniary Mulcts ONLY. Now the Magistrate (to whose Discretion this must be left) may either mistake in judging, what Pecuniary Mulcts ARE moderate; or through Avarice and Cruelty may be led, under the Pretext of imposing MODERATE Pecuniary Mulcts, to levy EXORBITANT FINES.

THE general Answer to this Objection is, That it concludes with equal Strength against trusting the Magistrate with any discretionary Power at all. Yet it is plain that all Magistrates have, and in many Cases must have, a discretionary Power; from which, ordinarily, we find no ill Effects, nor can find any but where the Magistrate pays no Regard to the Rules of Reason, Justice and Equity. But more particularly,

1. As to the Difficulty of judging what Pecuniary Mulcts are moderate; 'Tis here as it is in most other Cases, hard to fix upon the indivisible Point where moderate Courses end, and extravagant ones begin: Yet there can be no considerable Deviation on either Side, which will not fall under the Notice of common Sense. 'Tis hard to determine precisely how much Liquor a Man may drink consistently with the Rules of Sobriety. Yet it would be ridiculous to propose it as a Matter of Difficulty, how to distinguish a Temperate Man from a Sot. In the present Case, if a Dissenter from the National Religion were fined only the Parings of his Nails, every one would judge it to be no Fine at all. On the other Hand, if he had a Mulct set upon him to the Value of his whole Estate, every one would as readily determine it to be immoderate. The Temper lies some where between both Extreams; which though no Man can define to a Mathematical Exactness, yet a Man of ordinary Discretion, from a general Knowledge and Observation of Mankind, will be able to discover so far as is useful. But,

2. WHAT if the Magistrate wilfully, and against all Reason, takes Occasion from hence to oppress and harass Dissenters? I answer, 1. That there is little Danger to be apprehended from this Quarter, in mixt or popular Governments, where the Executive Power is tied down by special Rules, and the People are governed by no Laws, but such as are of their own making. It were as easy a matter for the Parliament in Great Britain, or for the States in Holland, to proportion the Sum that every Dissenter shall pay for his Liberty, as it is to determine how much the Subject shall be assessed to the Publick Revenue. And although in difficult and distracted Times, when Party Quarrels run high, and Men have lost their Temper, such Inconveniencies might arise, as would make it reasonable to wish that such Measures, for a Season, might be forborn: Yet upon the whole, and in the ordinary Course of Things, I see no Reason to apprehend that the whole Body of any Nation should be disposed to act with less Wisdom and Integrity here, than in other Matters of State, which are and must be left to their Discretion. 2. Even in absolute, unlimited Governments, you have the same Remedy here, that you have in all other Publick Grievances. If we go to the Patrons of the Popular Scheme, we shall find them admitting through Necessity a discretionary Power, not less dangerous to Civil Government, than this is conceived to be to Religion. They tell us that though small Grievances are to be born, yet when the supreme Power so far abuses his Trust as to endanger the Safety of the Commonwealth, the People have a Right to use Force to redress themselves.

Now if it should be asked (as it usually is on this Occasion) who are to judge when Grievances are consistent, or not consistent, with the Safety of the Commonwealth; their Answer must be, the People. But may not the People be jealous beyond Reason; and apprehend Dangers where there are really none? Or may not they grow Factious and Tumultuous, and resolve right or wrong either to have no Government, or to change Hands? Clear your own Scheme from this Difficulty, and you will at the same Time clear mine. When any considerable Number of Men are called upon by united Counsels, to determine Measures for the common Good; it is generally to be presumed that they will act discreetly and wisely. This is the fundamental Rule, upon which all Popular Schemes of Government subsist. Now if you have Occasion for this Maxim, pray take it and wellcome. But be so just as to allow me to make Use of it in my Turn: For 'tis certain that it will serve us both alike, or it will serve neither of us.

AND now I have likewise done with Exceptions: For it would be endless to pursue all that may be found in the Writers on the Side of Toleration; and needless, because they do not affect the Scheme I propose to be considered, but other Methods which they had in View. To give an Instance of this, Mr. Locke takes Pains to expose the Absurdity of punishing Dissenters *to make them consider*. The Substance of what he says is, that "in Truth Dissenters are punished *because they are Dissenters*, and not *to make them consider*. That to punish them *to make them consider* is absurd and unjust, because *some* may have considered *already*, and it is impossible to distinguish *these*, from those who have *not* considered, &c." (y) All which Reasons, and a Hundred more such, will (so far at least as I am concerned in them) admit of a very plain and short Answer, *viz.* By saying (as the Truth indeed is) that Dissenters are punished (if you will have it to be a Punishment) neither *because they are Dissenters*, (*i. e.* not merely because they are Dissenters) nor yet *to make them* (*i. e.* those who are punished) *consider*. They are not punished merely because they are Dissenters: Because it is supposed that, if it could certainly be known beforehand that they are Sincere Dissenters, they would not be punished. Nor are they punished *to make them consider*: Because these Penalties being intended as a Test whereby to distinguish the Sincere from the Insincere; it is presumed that those who submit to these Penalties are Sincere, *i. e.* have considered already. But why then are they Punished? Why, 1. They are considered as Dissenters. This is the *Causa sine qua non*; or the Circumstance without which these Penalties would not be laid upon them. But then, 2. The proper, immediate Reason why these Penalties are laid upon them is, because they are Men capable of imposing upon the Magistrate, by pretending Scruples of Conscience where there are none, or where under a due Care there would be none, and because their submitting to these Penalties hath the Nature of an Evidence to shew, that they do not impose upon him. Is there Sense, I pray, in this, or is there none? If you say there is none, I shall desire to be told the Reason why. Of the same Stamp with this, is another Objection frequently urged, both by him and by other Writers, *viz.* That those who plead for Moderate Penalties, will in Consequence of their Principles be obliged to have Recourse to great ones, IF these Moderate ones WILL NOT DO. Will not do what? Why bring over all Dissenters (I suppose) to the National Religion; or so many at least as the Magistrate has a Mind should come over. But, this is not what this Method proposes. On the contrary, it grants a Liberty for all those to separate, who separate honestly, and upon a Principle of Conscience; and only provides (so far as Human Affairs will permit) a Remedy against Licentiousness: And this is what such moderate Penalties must be supposed ALWAYS

(y) Second Lr. for Toleration.

to do. It follows then from these Principles, that the Magistrate ought NEVER to proceed to violent Measures. Rather he should conclude, That if the National Religion, notwithstanding it hath all the Weight of Publick Instruction on its Side; notwithstanding that none are admitted to Civil Offices, or to any Interest in the Government, but those who profess the National Religion; and notwithstanding that all who separate themselves from the National Religion, are subjected to Pecuniary Mulcts or Impositions, so far as is consistent with Liberty of Conscience: If, I say, under all these Advantages the Magistrate finds that the National Religion cannot be supported, he will have Reason to conclude that it ought not to be supported, *i. e.* that it is not a true but a false Religion, which stands in Need of being reformed.

THIS is what I have to offer to justify the Lawfulness of PECUNIARY MULCTS. If any, setting these aside, had rather stop at NEGATIVE DISCOURAGEMENTS; I have only this to say, that PECUNIARY MULCTS have a more general Influence, and (supposing them to be proportioned as they ought to be) will be attended with no worse Consequences. This however I am very free to acknowledge: That if Negative Discouragements (in their full Latitude) were carefully applied, there would be the less Need of any farther Provision. For nothing can render any Body of Dissenters (where Truth is encouraged) considerable, but such an Interest in the Government as makes it worth the while for designing Politicians (who have Ends in View separate from the common Good) to court their Favour, by the Hopes of more and greater Privileges. Wherever there is a discontented Faction, Statesmen will never want a Party at their Devotion. — But with these I will have nothing to do. Still 'tis something to do good to a few: And how inconsiderable soever the Body of Dissenters might be supposed to be upon this Foot, consider'd as a Party against the Church; yet consider'd as Men in Error, they should not be beneath the Magistrate's Care, who is to look upon himself as much a Father to the meanest of his Subjects, as he is to the greatest. And this is that which above all things recommends the Use of Pecuniary Mulcts; *viz.* that they administer a Remedy where a Remedy is most wanted, *i. e.* to the low Part of Mankind, who for Want of Judgment being the most open to receive wrong Impressions, and the most greedy of Novelties, are therefore always the Persons among whom Seducers of all Sorts reap the most plentiful Harvest. I would not be misunderstood in what I say. I am not dictating to my Superiors, nor taxing them with Remifness, on Account of the Indulgence allowed to those who differ from us: I am only (with all due Submission to better Judgments) laying down what appears to me to be fitting and reasonable upon a general View of the Case; leaving it to those whom it concerns, to consider how it suits with our own particular Circumstances. 'Tis certain in this, as well as in all other Cases, that a Right does not infer an Obligation to execute that Right. Justice is best exercised when 'tis directed by Prudence and Discretion: And since 'tis impossible that the Magistrate should provide for Religion, without securing that Power by which he is enabled to provide for it; 'tis plain that no Measures (however otherwise justifiable) are to be taken, which by any unhappy Situation of Affairs, appear to be inconsistent with the Publick Safety. But barring all special Reasons, the Method, I say, is just and equitable; in which if I am right, the Dissenters ought not to take it amiss that they are told of it; who may learn from hence (what of late they have shewn themselves more unwilling to acknowledge than becomes them) how much they are indebted to the Clemency of the Government under which they live, and how much it is their Duty rather to be thankful for what they have, than to be always murmuring and complaining because they have not more.

IN Conjunction with this, and with the other Ways and Means above mentioned, there is one more of another Kind, which (by the way) it may not

be amiss to take Notice of; And that is this. What if all those who have a Mind to separate from the National Religion, should, in Order to obtain their Liberty, be obliged to declare solemnly upon Oath, "That according to the best of their Judgments they have consider'd the Matter with sufficient Care, and that it is against their Consciences to conform: That they will, at all Times hereafter, use their honest Endeavours to satisfy their Consciences; and, setting aside all secular or worldly Considerations, be ready to comply with the National Religion, as soon as ever they shall be convinced, that it is lawful for them so to do?" Would not this put many Dissenters to a stand? Most certainly. For though there may be some who mistake mere Humour and Fancy for Conscience; and others who have real Scruples, which (as to themselves) may be sufficient to justify the Plea of Conscience: Yet doubtless there are others (and those not a few) who, having Sense enough to see that there is nothing of any great Moment to be objected against our Communion, have also so much Honesty, that, were it thus put Home upon them, whether they really believe that by Conforming they should be guilty of a Sin before God, they would not say it. That which leads many honest well meaning Persons to dissent from the established Religion is certainly, not that they believe they should not do a good Thing by coming to Church, but because they think that by going to a Meeting they do a better. Now such as these, 'tis plain, would all be secured by this Expedient: For how great soever the supposed Advantage of one Way of Worship above another may be; no Man can be so absurd as to believe, that it ought to be purchased at the Expence of his Integrity, or that the Sin of Perjury will not do him much more Harm, than any such supposed Advantage will do him Good. Some perhaps may think, that there is little Need at this Time of Day, to multiply the Use of Oaths: And 'tis readily owned that it is a great Fault in Legislators to require Oaths, where there are not very weighty Reasons to justify it. But I am really of Opinion that the Use of an Oath in this Case would be liable to fewer Exceptions, than it is in most others, where Oaths are commonly practiced. For what can be more reasonable, than that in an Affair where Religion and Conscience only are, or only ought to be, concerned, the strongest Security should be required that Religion and Conscience can give? The great Objection against the Use of Oaths is, That they are the Occasion of leading Men into Perjury; and so indeed they too often prove, when worldly Interest stands on the wrong Side. But will the Dissenters say, or will any one else say it for them, that they separate to serve their worldly Interest? If they do, they have no Right to be tolerated: and if they do not, there will be no Sort of Decency in complaining if such an Oath should be required: For this implies no greater Hardship than the making themselves Judges of themselves. 'Tis setting Conscience against Pretences to Conscience; Or, in other Words, appealing to Conscience to find out the true Decision and Determinations of Conscience.

To conclude then; The Method which I propose has now been laid before you in all its general Parts: And with Respect to each of them it has been shewn, that whilst they help to restrain Licentiousness on the one Hand, they lay no real Burden upon Conscience on the other. Now what is true of every Part, is also true of the Whole put together: Each of them indeed has its Weight; and therefore the united Force of all, must be greater than the separate Force of any. This will be so much the more for the Advantage of true Religion, in those Places where Truth is encouraged. And though for the same Reason it must be confessed, that it will be so much the more for its Disadvantage, in those Places where Error is established in the Room of Truth; yet this is a Disadvantage which will grow less, in Proportion as the Number of those who are brought over to the Truth grows greater: Which, supposing the Use of Instruction, (which must be supposed in every Method) will always

daily

daily increase, where neither Oppression, nor any other unjustifiable Causes intervene to hinder. If no greater Restraint than what I have pleaded for, had ever been made Use of in Popish Countries; we may venture to say, without the help of a Prophetic Spirit, that there had been an End of Popery (*i. e.* of all the gross Errors of Popery) before this Time. And even now if you could remove that Force by which Men are chained down to her Communion, as it were, against their Wills; that general Corruption and Depravity of Manners among the more sensible Part of them, (to the introducing which Force hath been very greatly Instrumental:) If, I say, you could remove these Obstacles, it would be morally impossible that Protestantism, which is in the main a very reasonable Religion, should not get Ground, and at length for the most Part prevail. Much Time indeed must be allowed for the conquering inveterate Prejudices; and more perhaps will be necessary under the Use of this Method, than under the Method of those who are for entirely separating Religion from the Conveniencies and Inconveniencies of this World. But here lies the great Difference. One Method is more slow; the other less sure. One is calculated for a Continuance; the other in a little Time will grow good for nothing: One tends to throw the whole Weight of Human Authority on the Side of true Religion; the other divests it of all Aid from Human Authority, and leaves as much Room for Appetite and Passion to operate, as for Reason and Conscience. There needs no great Sagacity, to find out which of these two Methods is the best: And this I say, that whatever present Advantages might be felt from an absolute Indulgence, or from putting Truth and Error upon the same Foot as to all Civil Privileges, in some Corners of the World; Magistrates would soon see the Necessity of coming back to some Order again, to prevent that Decay of Religion and Piety which would every where ensue.

THERE may perhaps be other Causes besides that which I have mentioned, which contribute towards preventing a Reformation in Popish Countries, with which this Method is not particularly concerned. Of this Sort are the Intrigues of Princes and Politicians, who turn Religion into a Tool of State. Of this Sort too are the Avarice and Tenaciousness of certain Religious Orders of Men, who have engrossed more of the Publick Wealth than falls to their Share; and know not how to reform, because they know not how to refund. This latter Cause made a Reformation so difficult among ourselves; that nothing but the Resolution of a Prince pushed on by strong Passions could, so soon at least, have brought it to pass. And perhaps it may be no untrue Observation, if I say, that the ill Use that was made of the Revenues of the Church on that Occasion, has had no mean Share in deterring other Nations from following our Example. But let but these Abuses first be rectified; Let but Magistrates once seriously set themselves to promote what they think to be Truth and Righteousness; Let but Churchmen have every where such a Maintenance as is convenient for them, *i. e.* such a Maintenance as places them beneath the Envy of great Men, and yet above the Scorn and Contempt of those whom they are to influence by their Example and Authority, as well as by their Instruction; And let them but be secure, that when you design to reform you do not mean to plunder: Let, I say, but these great Points be taken Care of, and you will not find National Reformations to be such hard Things. Or if you do, it must then be said, that Mankind are most untractable Creatures; That there is little or no Sense of Religion or Regard to God in the World: And whether, in this State of the Case, more Good might be expected by giving up every Man wholly to himself, let any reasonable Person judge. Rather should we conclude in such a Case, that Human Means (which have their certain Period, beyond which they cannot go) are now at an End; and therefore, that, for what is farther necessary, our Business is humbly to depend upon the good Providence of God, who has Means in his Hands which we know not of; which he will certainly make Use of, when he sees it to be convenient.

I SHALL detain the Reader no longer than whilst I mention one Case more, which is,

VI. THE Case of those who join in no Way of Publick Worship at all. This, after what has been said, will admit of a very short and easy Solution: It being obvious to understand, that the Methods above laid down have the same Propriety here as in other Cases. But what shall we say as to Force? I answer, 1. If all Ways of Religious Worship be prohibited but one, all Force is unjust. For to use Force upon Men because they will not join in some Way of Religious Worship, when there is but one Way to join in, is to use Force to compel them to join in that one Way; which must needs be unreasonable, because the Foundation from whence this Necessity either of joining in one Way or in no Way ariseth, is it self unreasonable. The Magistrate, I have shewn, has no Right to use Force to suppress all Religions but one. If so he can have no Right to compel Men to join in that one Way. For a greater Liberty always implies a less; and 'tis certainly a less Liberty barely not to join in that Way which is prescribed by the Magistrate, than it is to set up other Ways in Opposition to it. But, 2. If there be an absolute Liberty to every Man to chuse what Religion he pleases, or a Liberty under such Restraints only as have afore been mentioned: I think that in this Case, those who neglect to join in any one Way of Publick Worship, are punishable with any Degree of Severity, that the Magistrate thinks fit to make Use of. For though (as I said just now) when all Ways of Religious Worship are prohibited but one, the Liberty of not joining in that one Way is a less Liberty, than the Liberty of setting up other Ways in Opposition to it; Yet it is plain, that when all Ways are allowed, the Liberty of joining in no Way is the greatest Liberty of all. And a Liberty, I say, it is not to be endured, because it cannot be supported by any Plea of Conscience. Many Christians (for of Christians only I would now be understood to speak) cannot join in this or in that Way of Publick Worship, consistently with their Consciences. But never was it yet heard of, nor am I able to apprehend, that it should be against the Conscience of a Christian to join in some Way, provided that Way may be of his own chusing. But may not a good Man be supposed, so far to disprove of all the Ways of Worship which are in Use in any Country, as to think himself obliged to join in none of them? The Case is possible to be conceived I own. But if all Ways be tolerated, 'tis a Case which in Fact is not likely to happen, because there is no Probability that any Man should be so singular in his Opinions, as not to be able to find enough of the same Mind to make a separate Congregation. But if all Ways of Worship are not tolerated, though there be but one single Exception, the Thing will be a great deal more than possible: And in that Case it will be right, that Dissenters and Absenters, consider'd as such, should have one and the same Treatment. A Papist, for Instance, can join in no Way of Publick Worship in Use here in *England*. Therefore it would be unjust to be severe upon Papists purely upon that Account. But setting this Case and such like Cases aside, the Rule is true, that those, who will not of their own Accord join in some one Way of Publick Worship, ought to be compelled to it; which if it does them no Good, (which nevertheless it is to be hoped that it will) it will be for the Good of others, as it helps to remove the Influence of bad Examples.

I WOULD be understood (as I said just now) to speak all this of professed Christians: For as to those who professing themselves to be no Christians, do likewise join in no Way of Publick Worship; their Case is of so little Concern to us at present, that I do not think it worth the Pains to examine it.



THE
YOUNG CHRISTIAN
INSTRUCTED.

IN TWO PARTS.

IN the former whereof, the CATECHISM of the Church of *England* is briefly explained.

IN the latter, the several Points of DOCTRINE contain'd therein, are methodically set down; together with such TEXTS of SCRIPTURE as prove or confirm the same.

By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.



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I have been much assisted in this Work by the
Christianity of the Church of England, and the
like of which I have seen in no other Country.



T H E
P R E F A C E.

I SHALL not so far comply with Custom, as to waste any Time in making Apologies. Nor do I think it will be a proper Way of recommending this Performance to the Publick, to find Fault with what others have done in the same Kind before me. What I intend by Way of Preface, is only to lay down the Nature, Design, and Use of that which I now offer to my Reader; after which, I shall leave him to consult his own Reason, and if he pleases, his Experience, in Order to judge of the Importance of it.

THE Book (as the Title specifies) consists of two Parts, both directed to the same End, viz. the breaking Children of that common, but wretched Custom, of saying Things by Rote, putting them into a Way of thinking, and giving them (so far as their Capacities will allow) a thorough and perfect Understanding of the Principles of that most holy Religion into which they have been baptized.

IN the First Part, the Catechism of the Church of England is briefly explained, by several short continued Discourses upon the several Parts thereof. Thus far therefore this Exposition agrees in Kind with that of Bishop Beveridge. But then, as to the particular Manner wherein these Discourses are drawn up, it differs so much from that which the Bishop has observed in drawing up his, that my Method, in that Respect, may very well be called new. I am not so vain as to pretend, that this Exposition deserves, in Point of real Worth, to be compared with the other: But this Advantage it manifestly has over it, viz. that by being brought into a much shorter Compass, it may be both more easily purchased, and more easily learned; and, by Consequence, more beneficial to the poorer and more ignorant Sort of Children.

WHEN Children are able to repeat their Church Catechism perfectly, and are come to a competent Use of their Reason, (that is, when they are ten or twelve Years of Age) let this Exposition be put into their Hands; not to be gotten by Heart, but to be thoroughly understood.

To which End I propose, that the Catechist (or Person instructing) should accompany the Catechumen, (or Person to be instructed) and lead him all along, Step by Step, causing him first of all to read (or, if he cannot read, reading to him) a Paragraph, or some Part of a Paragraph, as he shall judge most convenient. This being done, let him presently resolve that which has been read into suitable Questions, i. e. into such Questions as may be directly answered by it, to see whether the Catechumen understands what he reads, or not. If he be unable to answer, let him be bidden to read the same Sentence or Paragraph over again, and desired, as he reads, to attend to the Question propounded. And if after this there remains any Question which the Catechumen cannot answer, let the Catechist help him, by shewing him the Connexion, Dependence, or Relation, that the several Words or Phrases, whereof such Sentence or Paragraph is compounded, have with, or upon, one another. This is the general Method of using the Exposition: As for any more particular Directions, they must be left to the Discretion of the Catechist.

THIS Method of Instruction, though perhaps it may cost the Catechist somewhat more Pains than the common one of expounding by set Questions and Answers, must, I am satisfy'd, be much more easy to the Catechumen, who is hereby wholly discharg'd from that laborious Task of getting a great deal every Week without Book; a Task which very few (in Country Parishes especially) have either Leisure or Abilities to go through with; and by which (to my own certain Knowledge) great Numbers of Children have been discouraged from so much as attempting after any higher Proficiency, than the being able barely to repeat their Church-Catechism. I should think also, that it must be more beneficial, because it is a Way of Instruction directed more immediately to the Understanding: Whereas in the other Way, Children having Answers as it were put into their Mouths, they have no Manner of Occasion to exercise their Reason; and hence it frequently happens, that after an Exposition has been thoroughly and perfectly learn'd, they remain almost as ignorant of the Principles of their Religion, as they were before. The Experience of this, was that which put that wise and good Bishop before mentioned upon drawing up his Exposition. And the same Experience soon convinced me how necessary it was that something should be contriv'd in the same Way, which might be of more general Use and Benefit.

IF this Method be continued for two or three Years, (in which Space the Exposition, by reading one Chapter every Lord's-Day only, may be gone through six or eight Times) I should hope that no Child, who is blessed with a tolerable Capacity, can fail of understanding his Catechism so well, as to be able to answer almost to any Question that a reason-
able

able Man would think proper to be asked. Which End being once attained, then, and not before, the Catechist may (if he thinks it needful) put his Catechumen upon getting the Second Part; wherein all the Points of Doctrine contained in the First are, Chapter by Chapter, orderly and methodically set down; together with such Texts of Scripture as are proper for the Proof or Confirmation of them. In this I have taken the same Care that the Understandings of Children should be exercised, that I took in the Exposition; for the Texts are not (according to the common Way) distinctly and immediately annexed to the Points they are brought to prove, but set down by themselves, in a confused Manner, that so the Catechumen may have nothing but his own Judgment to direct him in the Choice of them. Only to make this Matter as easy as possible, I have not, where the Points contained in any Chapter are many, set them down all at once, but divided them into smaller Portions, adding immediately after each Class, such Texts as are suitable to the several Points whereof it consists; by which Means, in the proving of any Point, the Catechumen will not be obliged to run over many Texts, before he will find one fit for his Purpose.

BEFORE the Catechumen be put to get these Texts by Heart, it is requisite that he should know how to apply them. To which End he may be required to read over such a Class or Number of Points, as the Catechist designs he should prove, together with the Texts annexed to them. This being done, the first Care to be taken is, that the Sense and Meaning of every Text be well understood; in Order whereto the Catechist may, if there be any Scripture Word or Phrase which carries any Difficulty with it, ask the Catechumen what he takes to be the Sense of it; and if he does not understand it, explain it to him by some other which is more easy and familiar. I have, at the Bottom of every Page, set down some short Explanatory Notes of this Kind; which I did chiefly with a View to those young Persons who will be so diligent as to study these Texts before they come to be examined. For as to the Catechists, I am sensible that few or none will have Occasion for such Observations.

THE Catechumen being thus instructed in the Meaning of every Text, the Catechist may then proceed to examine whether he understands how to apply them rightly: which he may do, by propounding to him any Point of Doctrine, and asking him which of the Texts he has read, proves it; or by reading over any Text of Scripture, and asking him which of the Points propounded is proved by it. Where he finds his Judgment to fail, he must help him, by explaining the Texts over again, and, if Need be, more thoroughly, shewing him the Point that is proved, and where the Force of the Argument lies. The Catechumen being thus conducted a whole Chapter through, and being able to understand,

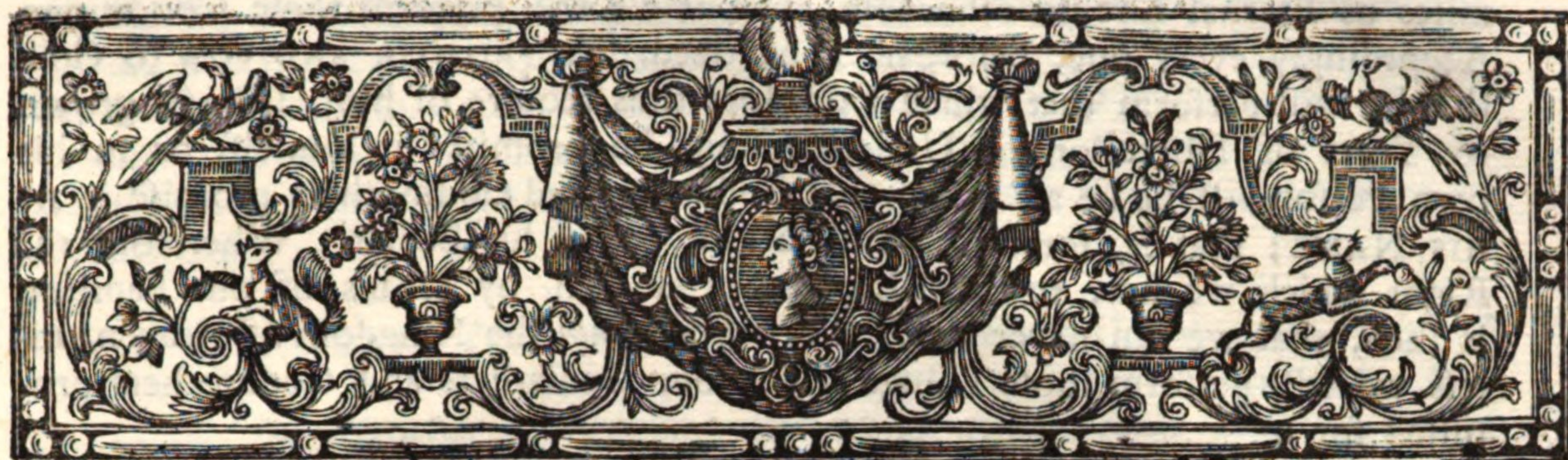
and readily to apply every Text therein to its proper Head, the Catechist may then require him to commit them to Memory, so as to be able to prove every Point without Book the next Time he comes to be examined.

THIS is the Method of Catechizing Youth, which seems to me to be the most rational; and which, by God's Assistance, I resolve to pursue. If the Reader should, upon the Perusal of the Whole, so far approve of it, as to venture upon the Trial of it with me, I earnestly pray for his Success: If not, I shall be no less desirous that he may find his Account in the Use of any other Method which he likes better.

IN this last Edition I have, at the Request of some Friends, resolv'd every Chapter into its proper Questions, which I hope may contribute towards rendring the Whole more useful.



THE



T H E
YOUNG CHRISTIAN
I N S T R U C T E D.

P A R T I.

Wherein the CHURCH-CATECHISM is explained.

S E C T I O N I.

Of the CHRISTIAN COVENANT.

C H A P. I.

Of the Promises on GOD's Part.

§. 1. **T**HE NAME enquired after in the first Question of our Church-Catechism, is our *Christian* Name; which is so called, because it was given us when we were made Christians. Now, to be *made a Christian*, is to be MADE A MEMBER OF CHRIST; that is to say, a Member of the *mystical* or *spiritual* Body of Christ; which is, *his Church*.

§. 2. WE were made Members of Christ IN OUR BAPTISM; that is, by being baptized, or, as we commonly speak, by being *christened*: And by being made Members of Christ, we became the CHILDREN OF GOD; that is, we were taken into Favour with God, and had thereupon certain Benefits or Privileges bestowed upon us, which we had not before. All which Privileges are comprehended, or contained under this one, namely, that we are INHERITORS of the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN; that is, we have a Right or Title to the Kingdom of Heaven, or a Life of everlasting Happiness after Death.

§. BUT you are not to imagine, that our Baptism gives us such a Right to the Kingdom of Heaven as that we cannot possibly fail of it: For God, when he admits us to be his Children by Baptism, does lay certain *Terms* or *Conditions*

upon us; that is, he enjoins or commands us to do certain Things; and promises us Eternal Life no otherwise, than if we will perform these Conditions. Accordingly every one, before he is baptized, does PROMISE AND VOW to God, that he will perform that which God does thus require of him. If he be grown to Years of Discretion or Understanding, he promises it himself, or in his own Person; if he be an Infant, his Godfathers and Godmothers promise it IN HIS NAME; that is, for him, in his Stead, or in his Behalf. Wherefore the Right which we have to the Kingdom of Heaven, by Means of our Baptism, is such, that we can never *really* and *indeed obtain* the Kingdom of Heaven, unless we will perform those Things which our Godfathers and Godmothers promised for us.

§. 1.

1. *What is the Name enquired after in the first Question of your Catechism?*
2. *Why is it called your Christian Name?*
3. *What is it to be made a Christian?*
4. *What is it to be a Member of Christ?*
5. *What is the Body of Christ?*

§. 2.

1. *When were you made a Member of Christ?*
2. *What did you become by being made a Member of Christ?*
3. *What is the Sum and Substance of those Privileges which we obtain by being the Children of God?*

§. 3.

1. *May we not fail of the Kingdom of Heaven, notwithstanding the Title which our Baptism gives us?*
2. *Does God then require any Terms or Conditions to be performed on our Part?*
3. *Does every one when he is baptized promise that he will perform these Conditions?*
4. *By whom does he promise this?*
5. *Of what Sort then is that Title to the Kingdom of Heaven, which we gain by our Baptism?*

C H A P. II.

Of the CONDITIONS required on MAN'S Part.

§. 1. **T**HE Things which our Godfathers and Godmothers promised for us when we were baptized, are in Number THREE; the FIRST whereof is, THAT WE SHOULD RENOUNCE THE DEVIL AND ALL HIS WORKS, THE POMPS AND VANITIES OF THIS WICKED or sinful WORLD, AND ALL THE SINFUL LUSTS OF THE FLESH.

§. 2. Now, by the *Devil*, you are to understand a certain *evil Spirit*, who, as the Scripture tells us, is in a State of Rebellion and Disobedience against God, and makes it his constant Business to draw as many of us as he can into the same Wickedness. By the *Works* of the Devil, you are to understand all Manner of Sin; which is therefore called his *Work*, because he delights, and is always employed therein, having sinned first of all himself, and still persisting, or continuing in Wickedness, and endeavouring by all possible Means to encourage and promote it.

§. 3. Bx

§. 3. BY *Pomps*, is meant the Honours, and by *Vanities*, the Riches of the World, which is called *wicked*, upon the Account of the many wicked Things that are done therein. Lastly: By *the sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, you are to understand all Desires or Inclinations after sinful Pleasures; all which we may be said to *renounce*, when we are not overcome by their Temptations, so as to commit Sin.

§. 4. THE SECOND Thing which our Godfathers and Godmothers promised for us when we were baptized, is, THAT WE SHOULD BELIEVE ALL THE ARTICLES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH; that is, all such Points of Doctrine as have been taught us by Jesus Christ, and are necessary to be believ'd in Order to Salvation. The THIRD and last (which is the Sum and Substance of all) is, THAT WE SHOULD KEEP GOD'S HOLY WILL AND COMMANDMENTS, AND WALK IN THE SAME ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES.

§. 5. NOW, all these Things which our Godfathers and Godmothers HAVE thus PROMISED FOR US, we ourselves are most certainly BOUND TO BELIEVE AND DO, because, if we do not, we can never obtain the Kingdom of Heaven, which is promised us only upon this Condition, as I have before observed. Wherefore, as we are bound HEARTILY to THANK GOD OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, THAT HE HATH CALLED US TO THIS STATE OF SALVATION, which we were admitted to by our Baptism, so we have Need to PRAY UNTO HIM TO GIVE US HIS GRACE, that is, the Help or Assistance of his Spirit, THAT WE MAY CONTINUE IN THE SAME State, in all Holiness of Conversation, UNTO OUR LIVES END.

§. 6. AND thus you see what every one gains by being baptized: He is taken into Covenant with God, that is, there is a *Contract*, or *Agreement* made between him and God. He promises God, that he will serve and obey him. God, upon this Condition, or in Consideration hereof, promises him *eternal Life*. Now, this Covenant God is pleased to make with us, not upon the Account of any Merit or Desert of ours, but out of his own free Mercy, THROUGH the Merits, and for the Sake of JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR, who, by his Death and Sufferings, did procure or obtain it for us.

§. 1.

1. How many Things did your Godfathers and Godmothers promise for you at your Baptism?

2. Which is the first?

§. 2.

1. Whom do you mean by the Devil?

2. What mean you by the Works of the Devil?

3. Why is Sin called the Work of the Devil?

§. 3.

1. What do you mean by Pomps?

2. What by the Vanities of the World?

3. Why is the World called wicked?

4. What do you mean by the sinful Lusts of the Flesh?

5. When may we be said to renounce all these?

§. 4.

1. What is the second Thing that your Godfathers and Godmothers promised for you?

2. What do you mean by the Articles of the Christian Faith?

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3. What

Of the ARTICLES of our BELIEF.

3. *What is the third and last Thing which your Godfathers and Godmothers promised for you?*

§. 5.

1. *Are we bound to believe and do all that our Godfathers and Godmothers promised for us?*
2. *Why so?*
3. *What is this State of Salvation which we here thank God for calling us unto?*
4. *What do you mean by the Grace of God?*

§. 6.

1. *What does every one gain by being baptized?*
2. *What mean you by being taken into Covenant with God?*
3. *What doth the Person baptized promise to God?*
4. *What doth God promise to him?*
5. *Doth God make this Covenant with us on the Account of our own Merit?*
6. *For whose Sake then, and for whose Merits doth he it?*
7. *How did Jesus Christ obtain this Benefit for us?*

SECTION II.

Of the Articles of our Belief.

CHAP. III.

Of our Belief in GOD the Father.

§. 1. **I**T having been promised for us in our Baptism, that we should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith, it is therefore very necessary that we should understand what these Articles are. Now the ARTICLES of the Christian Faith, are all of them contained in that short Form commonly called the *Creed* or BELIEF, which the *Scholar* is next bid to REHEARSE, that is, to repeat or say over.

§. 2. THE first Thing we are taught in this Creed, is, to BELIEVE IN GOD; which implies two Things. The *first* is, that we believe, or be fully persuaded in our Minds, *that there is a God*; that is to say, that there is a certain *Being*, who was THE MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH; that is, of the World, and all Things therein. The *second* is, that we do also believe of God whatsoever he has made known to us concerning himself, both as to his *Nature*, or what Sort of Being he is; and as to his *Attributes*, that is, those *Properties* or *Perfections* which do belong to him.

§. 3. As to the *Nature* of God, the Scripture tells us, that he is a *Spirit*; that is, he is *not a Man* like us; he *has not Flesh and Bones*, as we have; he is not made up of bodily Parts, as we are, and therefore is not to be *seen*, felt, or handled. As to his *Attributes*, our Creed tells us, that he is ALMIGHTY; that is, he is able to do all Things; and the Scripture does farther inform us, that he is most *wise*, *holy*, *just*, and *good*: That he is *eternal*; that is, always was, and always will be. Such is that Person who made the World, and whom we call *God*; and of this Sort or Kind of *Beings*, we believe, and are assured, that there is but *one*.

§. 4. It

§. 4. IT is this God whom we call the FATHER: and so he is upon several Accounts: For *first*, he is a Father to all Mankind, as he created, and daily preserves them. *Secondly*, He is in a peculiar Manner a Father to us Christians, forasmuch as he has admitted or taken us into Covenant with himself by Baptism. *Thirdly*, He is also in a particular Manner a Father to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, as I shall presently shew you.

§. 1.

1. *Where are the Articles of the Christian Faith contained?*
2. *What do you mean by Rehearse?*

§. 2.

1. *What is the first Thing your Creed teaches you?*
2. *How many Things are implied in believing in God?*
3. *What is the first?*
4. *What do you mean when you say that there is a God?*
5. *What do you mean by Heaven and Earth?*
6. *What is the second Thing implied in believing in God?*
7. *What do you mean by the Attributes of God?*

§. 3.

1. *What is God?*
2. *What mean you when you say that God is a Spirit?*
3. *What do you mean when you say that God is Almighty?*
4. *What does the Scripture tell you farther concerning God?*
5. *What mean you when you say that God is Eternal?*
6. *How many Gods are there?*

§. 4.

1. *Whom do you here call the Father?*
2. *Upon how many Accounts may God be called Father?*
3. *How is God a Father to all Mankind?*
4. *How is he in a peculiar Manner a Father to us Christians?*

C H A P. IV.

Of our Belief in GOD the SON.

§. 1. **T**HE next Thing our Creed teaches us to believe, is, in *JESUS CHRIST*; that is, that there was such a Person as *Jesus Christ*. Now, this *Jesus Christ* is he who taught us our Religion, and from whom we are called Christians: For the Word *Christian* signifies a *Disciple* or *Follower* of *Jesus Christ*.

§. 2. OF this *Jesus Christ* we are taught to believe several Things; as first of all that he is the *ONLY SON* of God; which is by no means contrary to what you have been taught before, namely, that God is a Father to us, and to all Mankind: For though we, and all Mankind, be in some Sense, or after a certain Manner, the Sons of God; yet we are not the Sons of God in the same Sense, and after the same Manner, wherein *Jesus* is the Son of God. For the understanding of which, you are to consider that *Jesus Christ* was not a mere Man as we are, but had a *Divine Nature* united or joined to the *Humane*, as will be explained to you by and by. Now *Jesus* having received this *divine Nature* by Communication from God the Father (in a peculiar incompre-

fible Manner) he is therefore called in our *Creed*, God's *only* Son, for no Person was ever thus begotten of God besides himself.

§. 3. BUT there is also another Sense respecting Christ's *humane* Nature, in which the Scripture calls him eminently *the Son of God*, and which our *Creed* next explains to us, for we are here told that *Jesus Christ* WAS CONCEIVED OF THE HOLY GHOST AND BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY. The Meaning of which is that *Mary* the Mother of *Jesus* was a *Virgin* when she was with Child of him; that which was conceived in her Womb, having been conceived, not by *Man*, but by the extraordinary Power of the *Holy Ghost*. *Jesus Christ* therefore you see, though he had a Woman to his Mother, as we have, yet had not a Man to his Father, the *Holy Ghost* supplying the Want of a Father: And since (as will be shewn hereafter) the *Holy Ghost* is *God*, his having been thus conceived of the *Holy Ghost*, does therefore in a more especial Manner entitle him to the Name of *the Son of God*.

§. 4. JESUS having been thus conceived in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary*, was afterwards BORN of her; and being grown to the Age of a Man, he SUFFERED: that is, he underwent a great deal of Trouble and Sorrow in this World. This happened UNDER PONTIUS PILATE: that is, under the Government of *Pontius Pilate*, or when *Pontius Pilate* was Governor over that Country where *Jesus* lived. After this, he WAS CRUCIFIED; that is, he was fastened to a *Cross*, upon which he hung till he DIED. Now, this *Crucifying* was a Sort of Punishment by which *Thieves* and *Murderers* were, in those Days, and in that Country, usually put to Death, as they are by hanging upon *Gallows's* now amongst us.

§. 5. JESUS being thus put to Death, his Body was BURIED, and his Soul DESCENDED, or went down INTO HELL; that is, into the Place of the Dead: where it having remained until THE THIRD DAY after he was crucified, HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD; that is, he came to Life again. After this, HE ASCENDED, or went up INTO HEAVEN, where he now SITTETH AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY: which Expression of *sitting at God's Right Hand*, you are not to understand as if God had *Hands* or *Feet*, (for, as I said before, God is a *Spirit*, and has not *Flesh and Bones* as we have) but that *Jesus* is now raised to a Place of the highest *Power*, *Honour*, and *Authority* under God the Father, and so is become OUR LORD and Governor.

§. 6. JESUS being now in Heaven, shall continue there till the End of the World; at which Time HE SHALL COME FROM THENCE, that is, from Heaven, TO JUDGE BOTH THE QUICK, that is, those who shall be found alive upon the Earth at his coming, AND THE DEAD, who shall then come to Life again. All these, I say, and therefore all Men, shall Christ *judge*; that is, he will examine how they have behaved themselves in this World, and then either acquit or condemn them, according as their Actions have been either good or evil.

§. 1.
1. What mean you when you say that you believe in *Jesus Christ*?
2. Who is *Jesus Christ*?
3. What does the Word *Christian* signify?

§. 2, 3.
1. If God be a Father to us and to all Mankind, as you said before: How is it that you now say that *Jesus* is the only Son of God?
2. In what Sense is *Jesus* here called God's only Son?

3. *Is there not another Sense in which Jesus is in Scripture called eminently the Son of God?*
4. *How is this? Explain it to me.*
5. *Had not Jesus then a Man to his Father as we have?*
6. *How is Jesus's being conceived of the Holy Ghost a Reason for his being called the Son of God?*

§. 4.

1. *What mean you when you say that Jesus Christ suffered?*
2. *What do you mean when you say that he suffered under Pontius Pilate?*
3. *What mean you when you say that he was crucified?*
4. *What was this Crucifying?*

§. 5.

1. *What became of the Body of Jesus after he was put to Death?*
2. *What became of his Soul?*
3. *What do you understand by Hell?*
4. *How long did the Soul of Jesus continue in Hell?*
5. *What happened after that?*
6. *What mean you by rising from the Dead?*
7. *What became of Jesus after he arose from the Dead?*
8. *Hath God Hands or Feet?*
9. *What then do you mean when you say that Jesus Christ sitteth at God's Right Hand?*

§. 6.

1. *Is Jesus now in Heaven?*
2. *How long shall he continue there?*
3. *From whence shall Jesus come at the End of the World?*
4. *What shall he come for?*
5. *Who are the Quick?*
6. *How shall Jesus judge the Dead? Shall the Dead come to Life again?*
7. *What do you mean when you say that Christ shall judge them?*

C H A P. V.

Of our Belief in GOD the HOLY GHOST, &c.

§. 1. **T**HE next Thing our Creed teaches us, is, to BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST, or *Spirit*; which implies not only that we should believe *that there is a Holy Ghost*, but also that we rightly believe *what he is*. Now, the *Holy Ghost* is a *Person* distinct or different from the *Father* and the *Son*, and yet of one and the same divine Nature with them both.

§. 2. WE are taught also to believe in THE HOLY CATHOLICK CHURCH; that is, that (according to our Saviour's Promise) there *has been*, from the Beginning of the Gospel, and *shall be* to the End of the World, a *Catholick* or *Universal Church*. Now, by the *Universal Church*, you are to understand all those who have been, are, or shall be united or joined together in one Body, or Society, under *Jesus Christ*, the *Head*, or supreme Law-giver. That Men may be joined together in such a Body, or Society, these two Things are necessary, namely, *First*, They must all have the same Faith, that is, must all join together in the Belief of those Articles or Points of Doctrine, the Belief whereof Christ has made necessary to Salvation. *Secondly*, They must all submit to, or hold themselves bound by whatsoever Laws, or Rules of Govern-

ment, have been appointed either by Christ *immediately*, or by any Persons vested with sufficient Power or Authority from him.

§. 3. THIS *uniting or joining together in one Body or Society* under Christ, is (partly at least) what we mean by THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS. For the Word *Communion* signifies *Fellowship*, and the Word *Saints* signifies *holy Persons*. Now, as all the Members of the Catholick Church do, by being joined together in one Society, hold a *Communion or Fellowship* one with another; so all these Members are also *Saints* or *holy Persons*. For (as you have before been taught) all the Members of Christ are entered into Covenant with God by Baptism, and are thereby become a *holy People* to God; that is, a People whom God hath set apart, or chosen to himself, to be his Children and Servants. And this gives us a Reason why the *Catholick Church* is called *holy*, even because the *Members* of it are *holy*.

§. 4. THE next Thing our Creed teaches us to believe, is, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. Now, we *sin* when we break any of God's Commandments; and God *forgives* us our Sins, when he does not intend to punish us for our Sins. Wherefore, what we profess to believe by this Article, is, that through the Merits of *Jesus Christ*, God will not punish us when we have broken his Commandments: But you must observe, that this *Forgiveness of Sins* is not promised us, but upon Condition that we *repent us* of our Sins, that is, forsake our Sins, and become good for the Time to come.

§. 5. THE last Thing our Creed teaches us to believe, is, THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING, the Meaning of which is, that the *Bodies* of all those who *are dead*, or *shall die*, shall, at the End of the World, when Christ comes to Judgment, *be raised*, or *come to Life again*, never to die any more, but to continue for ever in a *happy Condition*, if they have been *good Men*, or in a State of *Sorrow and Misery*, if they have been *wicked*.

§. 1.

1. *What does the Word Ghost signify?*
2. *What does believing in the Holy Ghost imply?*
3. *Who is the Holy Ghost?*

§. 2.

1. *What mean you when you say that you believe in the Holy Catholick Church?*
2. *What does the Word Catholick signify?*
3. *What do you understand by the Universal Church?*
4. *How many Things are necessary towards the joining Men together in one Body or Society under Jesus Christ the Head?*
5. *Which is the first?*
6. *When may we be said to have all the same Faith?*
7. *Which is the second Thing necessary towards joining Men together in one Body under Christ?*

§. 3.

1. *What do you mean by the Communion of Saints?*
2. *What does the Word Communion signify?*
3. *What does the Word Saints signify?*
4. *Do all the Members of the Catholick Church hold a Communion one with another?*
5. *Are they all Holy Persons?*
6. *How are they all Holy Persons?*
7. *Why is the Catholick Church called Holy?*

§. 4.

§. 4.

1. *When do we sin?*
2. *When does God forgive us our Sins?*
3. *What therefore do we profess to believe by this Article?*
4. *Upon what Condition hath God promised to pardon Sin?*
5. *What is it to Repent?*

§. 5.

1. *What do we mean when we say that we believe in the Resurrection of the Body and the Life everlasting?*
2. *What shall become of Good Men after the Resurrection?*
3. *What shall become of Bad Men?*

C H A P. VI.

Wherein the Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, of the Redemption wrought by Jesus Christ, and of the Sanctification of the Holy Ghost, are more particularly explained.

§. 1. **A**FTER having particularly set down the several Articles of the Christian Faith, our Church-Catechism gives us a Summary or short Account of the CHIEF, or most principal Matters which we LEARN FROM them; which are these three following, *viz.* FIRST, We learn to believe IN GOD THE FATHER, WHO HATH MADE US, AND ALL THE WORLD. SECONDLY, We learn to believe IN GOD THE SON WHO HATH REDEEMED US, AND ALL MANKIND. THIRDLY, We learn to believe IN GOD THE HOLY GHOST, WHO HATH SANCTIFIED US, AND ALL THE ELECT PEOPLE OF GOD.

§. 2. Now, from hence you cannot but have observed, that the Name of GOD is ascribed or given to three different *Persons*, *viz.* to the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*; which you are not to understand as if there were *three Gods*, but that in the *divine Nature*, or *Godhead*, there are *three Persons*, to wit, the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*; and that therefore these *three Persons*, the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, are all of them but *one* and the same *God*.

§. 3. But you must take Notice, that when we say that *the Son* is *God*, we do not mean that the Man *Christ Jesus*, that is to say, that that very *Flesh* and *Blood* which (as you have heard) was conceived in, and born of the Virgin *Mary*, is *God*; for this is a Contradiction. But when we say, that *the Son* is *God*, we speak in Reference to that *divine Nature* which *Jesus Christ* had before he was born of the Virgin, even from all Eternity.

§. 4. THE Matter in short is this: There is, always was, and always will be, a certain Person whom S. *John* calls THE WORD. Now, this WORD is the second Person in the blessed *Trinity*, that is, he is the second of those three Persons, which (as I said just now) are all of them but one and the same *God*. This WORD, or second Person in the *Trinity*, came down from Heaven, and was (after a Manner extraordinary, and which we cannot possibly understand) *united* or *joined* to that *Flesh* which was conceived in, and born of the Virgin *Mary*; that is, to the Man *Christ Jesus*. So that you see *Jesus Christ* had *two* Natures; by the one whereof he *was*, that is, *he had a Being from all Eternity*, and by the other, *was born in Time* of the Virgin *Mary*. With Respect to the *former* Nature, he is the second Person in the *Trinity*, and so is truly and properly *God*; with Respect to the *latter*, he is the Son of a Woman, and so

truly and properly *Man*. *Jesus Christ* therefore is both *God* and *Man* in one and the same Person.

§. 5. THE End or Purpose for which the second Person in the *Trinity* became *Man*, and for which the *Man Christ Jesus* did suffer and die, was, that he might *redeem*, that is, *ransom*, *rescue*, or *deliver* all Mankind from the Punishment that was due to their Sins, namely, from *eternal Death*; for *the Wages of Sin is Death*, that is, *eternal Death*; and all Mankind being Sinners, all Mankind must therefore have been punished with eternal Death unless it had pleased God to forgive them their Sins. Now, God was resolved not to forgive Mankind their Sins, without some Satisfaction: This Satisfaction *Christ* has made by his Death and Sufferings, whereupon God is pleased to forgive us all our past Sins, to release us from the Punishment of eternal Death which was due to them, and to promise us a Life of everlasting Happiness, upon Condition that we will serve and obey him for the Time to come.

§. 6. BUT such is the Corruption and Depravity of our Natures; so inclined are we to Evil, and backward to that which is good, that we are not able to serve and obey God of ourselves, or by our own natural Strength; and therefore we have Need of some other Help to *sanctify*, or make us holy, that is, to enable us to perform our Duty as we ought. This Help the third Person in the blessed *Trinity*, even the *Holy Ghost*, affords to us, and to all the elect or chosen People of God, that is, to all true Believers, who may be sure not to want Grace or Strength sufficient to do what God commands them to do, provided they will sincerely use their own Endeavours, and heartily pray unto God for it.

§. 1, 2.

1. What do we chiefly learn from the Articles of our Belief?
2. Do you not observe that the Name of God is here given to three different Persons?
3. Who are the three Persons to whom the Name of God is given?
4. Are the Father, Son and Holy Ghost three Gods?
5. What are they then?

§. 3.

1. You say that the Son is God. Do you mean by this, that the *Man Christ Jesus* is God?
2. What then do you speak of, when you say that the Son is God? Explain this.

§. 4.

1. Who is the Word?
2. What do you mean when you say that the Word is the Second Person in the Trinity?
3. What did this Word do?
4. Had *Jesus Christ* then two Natures?
5. What is he with Respect to the former Nature?
6. What is he with Respect to the other Nature?

§. 5.

1. For what End or Purpose did the Second Person in the Trinity become *Man*, and the *Man Christ Jesus* suffer and die?
2. What do you mean by *redeem*?
3. What is the Punishment due to Sin?
4. Had all Mankind deserved this Punishment?
5. Why so?
6. Did God require any Satisfaction for Sin?
7. And hath *Christ* made this Satisfaction?

8. *How hath Christ made this Satisfaction?*
9. *What do we gain by this Satisfaction?*
10. *Upon what Condition hath God promised Everlasting Happiness through Christ Jesus?*

§. 6.

1. *Are we able to serve and obey God of ourselves, or by our own natural Strength?*
2. *By whom then must we be enabled?*
3. *To whom doth the Holy Ghost afford his Help or Assistance?*
4. *Who are the Elect or Chosen People of God?*
5. *What must we do to obtain the Help or Assistance of the Holy Ghost?*

SECTION III.

Of the TEN COMMANDMENTS.

CHAP. VII.

Of the three first Commandments.

§. 1. **T**HE *third* and last Thing which was promised for us in our Baptism, is, *That we should keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, &c.* Now, all the Commandments of God, or at least the most principal of them, are contained in those TEN WHICH GOD SPAKE to the Children of *Israel* by *Moses*, and which we may find written IN THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER of the Book of *EXODUS*.

§. 2. THE *first* of these Commandments is, THOU SHALT HAVE NONE OTHER GODS BUT ME, that is, thou shalt not think or own any Person to be God, *except* or *besides* me. Thou shalt give me that Honour that is due unto me, and not give it to any other.

§. 3. WE may break this Commandment several Ways: As, *first*, and in general, by *all heinous* and *wilful* Sins. *Secondly*, and more particularly, by *Atheism*, that is, by saying in our Heart, or with our Mouth, that there is no God. *Thirdly*, by *Blasphemy*, that is, by thinking or speaking any Thing that is unworthy of God; as suppose we should say or think that he is not *Wise*, *Just*, *Good*, &c. *Fourthly*, by paying *Religious Worship* to any Thing besides God; as suppose we should *swear by*, or *pray* to any *Saint*, *Angel*, &c. *Fifthly*, and in short, we break this Commandment by every Thought, Word, or Action, which does in any wise shew that we have a mean Opinion of God, or of any Thing that more immediately belongs to him, as his *Word*, his *Ministers*, and the like.

§. 4. THE *second* Commandment is, THOU SHALT NOT MAKE TO THY SELF ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, that is, any Image *carved* out of *Wood*, *Stone*, or any other Materials; NOR THE LIKENESS OR PICTURE OF ANY THING THAT IS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, OR IN THE EARTH BENEATH, OR IN THE WATER UNDER THE EARTH, that is to say, of any *Angel*, of the *Sun*, *Moon*, or *Stars*; of any *Man*, *Beast*, *Bird*, *Fish*, &c. Of none of these Things, I say, must we make any Image or Picture *to ourselves*, that is, with an Intention to use or behave ourselves towards them as if they were Gods, by BOWING DOWN TO AND WORSHIPPING THEM, because THE LORD OUR GOD IS A JEALOUS GOD, that is, he is very

strict and severe in maintaining his Honour, and will therefore VISIT or punish THE INIQUITY OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION, that is, upon the Children and Grand-children OF THEM THAT HATE or do not obey HIM, AND SHEW MERCY UNTO THOUSANDS IN or among THEM THAT LOVE HIM AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS.

§. 5. THE *third* Commandment is, THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN, that is, thou shalt not take into thy Mouth, or use God's Name, *lightly, wantonly, to no Purpose, or to any evil Purpose*: FOR THE LORD WILL NOT HOLD HIM GUILTLESS, that is, he will look upon him to be *guilty, or a wicked Person, WHO THUS TAKETH HIS NAME IN VAIN.*

§. 6. WE break this Commandment; *First*, By crying out, *O Lord, O God, O Jesus, or O Christ*, at every Turn, or by any other rash or unadvised Usage of God's Name. *Secondly*, By *cursing*, that is, when we call upon God to damn any Person, or to send any other evil or hurtful Thing upon him. *Thirdly*, By *swearing falsely*, that is, when we promise any Thing upon Oath, which we cannot, do not intend, or are not careful to perform: Or when we say or affirm any Thing upon Oath, which we do not know to be true. *Fourthly and lastly*, We break this Commandment, when we *swear vainly*, that is, in our ordinary Discourses one with another, or upon any Occasion where we have no Need to swear.

§. 1, 2.

1. *Where are the Commandments of God principally contained?*
2. *Which is the First of these Commandments?*
3. *What is the Meaning of this Commandment?*

§. 3.

1. *How many Ways may we break this Commandment?*
2. *What is Atheism?*
3. *What is Blasphemy?*

§. 4.

1. *Which is the Second Commandment?*
2. *What do you mean by a graven Image?*
3. *What do you mean by the Likeness?*
4. *What are the Things in Heaven above, in the Earth beneath, and in the Water under the Earth, of which we must not make any Image or Picture to ourselves?*
5. *What is it to make an Image or Picture to ourselves?*
6. *Why must we not do this?*
7. *What do you mean when you say that God is Jealous?*
8. *What will his Jealousy cause him to do?*

§. 5.

1. *Which is the Third Commandment?*
2. *What is it to take God's Name in vain?*
3. *Why must we not take God's Name in vain?*
4. *What mean you when you say that the Lord will not hold him guiltless?*

§. 6.

1. *How many Ways may we break this Commandment?*
2. *When do we Curse?*
3. *When do we swear falsely?*
4. *When do we swear vainly?*

C H A P. VIII.

Of the seven last Commandments.

§. 1. **T**HE *fourth* Commandment is, REMEMBER THAT THOU KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH-DAY: Now, the *Sabbath-Day* is the Day commonly call'd *Sunday*, or the *Lord's Day*, which is every SEVENTH Day. This Day we are to *keep holy*, that is, *spend* after a *holy* or *religious* Manner; and therefore we must not IN or upon IT DO ANY MANNER of WORK, that is, any Worldly Business, but that which is of absolute Necessity to be done.

§. 2. THIS Duty of keeping the Sabbath-Day holy must be observ'd, not only by ourselves, but also by OUR SONS AND OUR DAUGHTERS; by OUR MAN-SERVANTS, AND by OUR MAID-SERVANTS, and by the STRANGER THAT IS WITHIN OUR GATES, that is, by every *Guest*, *Sojourner*, or *Boarder* in our Families: Yea, even OUR CATTLE must on this Day be suffered to rest from their Labours.

§. 3. THE Reason of all this is, because IN SIX DAYS THE LORD MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH, THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IN THEM IS, AND RESTED THE SEVENTH DAY: For therefore it was that THE LORD BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY AND HALLOWED IT, that is, *set it apart*, or appointed it to *holy* or *religious* Uses.

§. 4. WE break this Commandment; *First*, When we do thereupon use or exercise the Business of our *Trade* or *Calling*, provided the Exercise of such Trade or Calling upon that Day be not of Necessity. *Secondly*, We break this Commandment when we either refuse or neglect going to Church on *Sundays*, when we are not prevented by any lawful Hindrance or Impediment, that is, by any Business of great Necessity or Importance. *Thirdly*, We break this Commandment, when, Church being over, we spend the remaining Part of the Day in playing about the Streets, or any other vain and unprofitable Diversions, which ought rather to be employed in reading our Books, saying our Prayers, and such like holy and religious Exercises. *Lastly*, We most of all break this Commandment, when we spend this Day, or any Part of it, in Lewdness and Debauchery; as in *Gaming*, *Drunkenness*, *Whoredom*, and the like, as too many wicked and ungodly Persons do.

§. 5. THE *fifth* Commandment is, HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER. Now, to *honour* our Father and Mother, is to be *dutiful* to our Father and Mother; and he that does this, HIS DAYS SHALL BE LONG IN THE LAND WHICH THE LORD HIS GOD GIVETH HIM; that is, God will either give him a long Life here, or, what is much better, will reward him with a greater Degree of Glory and Happiness hereafter.

§. 6. WE break this Commandment; *First*, When we refuse to listen to the Advice of our Parents, or to obey their lawful Commands. *Secondly*, When we behave our selves unkindly or disrespectfully towards them, either by Word or Deed; as for Instance, when we give them rude, sawcy, or unmannerly Language; when we neglect or refuse to relieve them in their Necessities. In a Word, when we do not make it our constant Endeavours to please, support, and comfort them to the utmost of our Power.

§. 7. THE *sixth* Commandment is, THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER; that is, thou shalt not *spitefully* and *maliciously* take away, or be concerned in taking away

away, the Life of any Man. The *seventh* is, THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; that is, thou shalt not defile thy Body by any unchaste or unclean Action. The *eighth* is, THOU SHALT NOT STEAL; that is, thou shalt not either secretly, or by open Violence, take away from another Man that which is his own.

§. 8. THE *ninth* Commandment is, THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOUR; that is, thou shalt not accuse any Man of any Crime, whereof thou dost not know him to be guilty. The *tenth* and *last* is, THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE, THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S WIFE, NOR HIS SERVANT, NOR HIS MAID, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS ASS, NOR ANY THING THAT IS HIS. The Meaning of which is, that we must not fret or make our selves uneasy for that which another Man has; much less must we endeavour to get it by unlawful Means.

§. 1.

1. Which is the Fourth Commandment?
2. Which is the Sabbath-day to us Christians?
3. How often does this Day return?
4. What is it to keep the Sabbath-day Holy?
5. What Work is forbidden to be done upon the Sabbath-day?

§. 2, 3.

1. By whom must the Sabbath-day be kept Holy?
2. Whom do you understand by the Stranger that is within our Gates?
3. In what Manner must our Cattle be disposed of upon the Sabbath-day?
4. Why do we keep the Sabbath-day Holy?
5. What do you mean when you say that the Lord hallowed the Seventh Day?

§. 4.

1. How many Ways may we be guilty of a Breach of this Commandment?
2. Which is the First Way?
3. May we upon no Account exercise the Business of our Trade and Calling upon the Lord's-Day?
4. Which is the Second Way?
5. May we never omit going to Church on the Lord's-Day?
6. Which is the Third Way?
7. How ought we to spend the remaining Part of the Lord's-Day?
8. Which is the Fourth and last Way of breaking this Commandment?

§. 5, 6.

1. Which is the Fifth Commandment?
2. What is it to honour our Father and Mother?
3. What Reward is here promised to those who do so?
4. What do you understand by that Promise?
5. How many Ways may we be guilty of a Breach of this Commandment?
6. Which is the First? Second, &c.?

§. 7.

1. Which is the Sixth Commandment?
2. When are we guilty of Murder?
3. Which is the Seventh?
4. When are we guilty of Adultery?
5. Which is the Eighth?
6. What is it to Steal?

§. 8. Which

§. 8.

1. Which is the Ninth Commandment?
2. What is it to bear false Witness against our Neighbour?
3. Which is the Tenth?
4. What is the Meaning of this Commandment?

SECTION IV.

Of the Sum and Substance of the Ten Commandments, contained under our Duty towards God, and towards our Neighbour.

C H A P. IX.

Of our Duty towards GOD.

§. 1. FROM these ten Commandments we CHIEFLY LEARN TWO THINGS; that is, the Duties contained in them may be reduced or brought under two *chief* or *general* Heads, to wit, OUR DUTY TOWARDS GOD, AND OUR DUTY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOUR.

§. 2. OUR DUTY TOWARDS GOD, IS, First, To BELIEVE IN HIM. Secondly, To FEAR HIM; that is, to be afraid of those Punishments wherewith he will punish Sinners, and thereupon to take Care not to offend him. Thirdly, To LOVE HIM; which we must do WITH ALL OUR HEART, WITH ALL OUR MIND, WITH ALL OUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH; that is, a great deal more than we love any Thing else. Fourthly, To GIVE HIM THANKS; that is, to have always in our Hearts a thankful Remembrance of his Mercies; and to shew forth the same, by behaving our selves affectionately and dutifully towards him.

§. 3. It is our Duty, Fifthly, To PUT OUR WHOLE TRUST IN HIM; that is, to be fully perswaded that he does, and always will do, that which is best and fittest to be done; and thereupon to be contented with our present Conditions. Sixthly, To CALL UPON HIM; that is, to *pray* to him in all our Wants. Seventhly, To HONOUR HIS HOLY NAME AND HIS WORD. Now, by God's *Word*, you are to understand the *Scriptures*, or Books of the *Old* and *New Testament*, commonly called *The Bible*, which we *honour* when we read them frequently, soberly, reverently, with Attention and Regard to every Thing which is there either commanded or forbidden.

§. 4. THESE are the chief or principal Heads of our Duty towards God; the Sum and Substance of all which is, that we must WORSHIP AND SERVE HIM TRULY ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES.

§. 1.

1. How many Things do we chiefly learn from the Commandments?
2. What are these two?

§. 2.

1. What is it to fear God?
2. How will they behave themselves who fear God?
3. How must we love God?

G g

4. What

4. *What is it to love God with all our Hearts, &c.?*
5. *What is it to give Thanks to God?*
6. *How will they demean themselves who are truly thankful?*

§. 3, 4.

1. *What is it to put our whole Trust in God?*
2. *How will they behave themselves who trust in God?*
3. *What is it to call upon God?*
4. *What do you mean by God's Word?*
5. *When do we honour God's Word?*
6. *What is the Sum and Substance of our Duty to God?*

C H A P. X.

Of our Duty towards our NEIGHBOUR in general.

§. 1. **O**UR DUTY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOUR consists of several Branches, which may be divided into three Kinds or Sorts. The *first* Sort consists of such Duties as we owe to all Men in general. The *second* consists of such Duties as we owe to *some particular Persons*, who stand in a more near Relation to us. The *third* consists of such Duties as do more immediately concern *our selves*; that is, the Government of our Appetites, Lusts, or Passions; which Duties, because they are seldom transgressed, without our being some Way or other hurtful to others, may therefore be well enough reckoned amongst the Duties which we owe to our Neighbour.

§. 2. I BEGIN with those Duties which we owe to all Men. Now, these may all of them be reduced to this one, *viz.* TO LOVE THEM AS OURSELVES; that is, so far as is possible, as well as we love ourselves, AND TO DO UNTO them, AS WE WOULD THEY SHOULD DO UNTO US; that is, to deal by them in all Cases, as we our selves should think it reasonable to be dealt with, if we were in their Places, and they in ours.

§. 3. FROM this general Rule, several other more particular Directions do naturally follow. As *first*, That we HURT NO BODY, either BY WORD OR BY DEED. *Secondly*, That we BE TRUE AND JUST IN ALL OUR DEALINGS. *Thirdly*, That we BEAR NO MALICE NOR HATRED IN OUR HEARTS; that is, that we do not design or wish any evil or hurtful Thing to any Man, upon the Account of any real or supposed Injury that he has done unto us, or because we are angry with him. *Fourthly*, That we KEEP OUR HANDS FROM PICKING; that is, from pilfering any little Thing, though of never so small a Value, AND FROM STEALING. *Fifthly*, That we KEEP OUR TONGUES FROM EVIL SPEAKING, LYING, AND SLANDERING. Now, we *slander* our Neighbour, when we *invent* or *raise* an evil Report of him, or spread such a Report abroad, either knowing it to be false, or not knowing it to be true. We *speak Evil* of our Neighbour, when we speak Abroad an evil, though true Report of him, without a just and reasonable Cause.

§. 1.

1. *Of how many several Branches does our Duty towards our Neighbour consist?*
2. *Which is the First?*
3. *—— Second?*
4. *—— Third?*

§. 2. 1. *What*

§. 2.

1. *What is that general Duty which we owe to all Men?*
2. *What is it to love our Neighbour as ourselves?*
3. *What do you mean by doing unto our Neighbour as we would he should do unto us?*

§. 3.

1. *What is it to bear Malice and Hatred in our Hearts?*
2. *What do you mean by picking?*
3. *When do we slander our Neighbour?*
4. *When do we speak Evil of our Neighbour?*

C H A P. XI.

Of particular Duties, &c.

§. 1. **T**HE Duties mentioned in the foregoing Chapter are such as we owe to *all Men*. Those which follow next, are such as we owe to *particular Persons*, upon the Account of some more near Relation which they stand in towards us.

§. 2. OF this Sort, is *first*, Our Duty towards OUR FATHERS AND MOTHERS, which is, TO LOVE, HONOUR, AND SUCCOUR them. Now to *succour* our Parents, is to *assist, help, or support* them to the utmost of our Powers in all Cases where they stand in Need of our Assistance. *Secondly*, Our Duty towards THE KING, AND ALL THAT ARE PUT IN any Place of Power or AUTHORITY UNDER HIM, which is, TO HONOUR them, that is, to pay them that *Respect* and *Reverence* which their several Stations do require; AND also to OBEY them; that is, to do as they command us to do, in all Cases where they have Power or Authority to command us.

§. 3. OUR Duty towards our GOVERNORS, TEACHERS, AND MASTERS, which is, TO SUBMIT OURSELVES to them; that is, to have a due Regard to their Counsels, Admonitions, and Directions, and to obey all their just and reasonable Commands. The same Duty we owe to our SPIRITUAL PASTORS, that is, to our *Parish-Ministers*, who are called *Pastors*, because they *feed us*; for a *Pastor* signifies *one that feeds*; and they are called *spiritual* Pastors, because they feed us with *spiritual Food*, that is, with the Word of God, by which our Souls are nourished, and grow in Grace and Goodness. *Fourthly*, To these particular Duties belongs the Duty which we owe to OUR BETTERS, that is, towards those Persons who are of a higher Rank, Quality, State, or Condition, than we ourselves. Our Duty towards such, is TO ORDER or behave OURSELVES LOWLY AND REVERENTLY, that is, humbly and respectfully TOWARDS them, as their Stations require.

§. 4. THE *third* and last Sort of Duties, are such as relate to the Government of our Appetites, Lusts, or Passions; by which we are oblig'd, *First*, To keep our Bodies IN TEMPERANCE AND SOBERNESS, that is, from all Excess, whether in eating, drinking, sleeping, or cloathing. *Secondly*, To keep our Bodies IN CHASTITY, that is from all immodest, filthy, and unclean Actions. *Thirdly*, We are bound also NOT TO COVET NOR DESIRE OTHER MENS GOODS, that is, not to be unreasonably fond or desirous of any Thing which another Man has: BUT TO LEARN AND LABOUR TRULY or honestly TO GET OUR OWN LIVINGS, AND TO DO OUR DUTIES IN THAT STATE OF LIFE UNTO WHICH

IT SHALL PLEASE GOD TO CALL US. That is to say, whatsoever our Trade, Calling, or Employment in this Life may be, we must be diligent therein, and content with that Portion of good Things, which it shall please God to bestow upon us.

§. 2.

1. *What is our Duty towards our Fathers and Mothers?*
2. *What is it to succour our Parents?*
3. *What is our Duty towards the King and all that are put in Authority under him?*
4. *What is it to honour these?*
5. *What is it to obey them?*
6. *How far are we to obey them?*

§. 3.

1. *What is our Duty towards our Governors, Teachers, and Masters?*
2. *What is it to submit ourselves to such?*
3. *What is our Duty towards our Spiritual Pastors?*
4. *Who are our Spiritual Pastors?*
5. *Why are they called Pastors?*
6. *Why are they called Spiritual Pastors?*
7. *What is that Spiritual Food?*
8. *What is our Duty towards our Betters?*
9. *Who are our Betters?*

§. 4.

1. *What is it to keep our Bodies in Temperance and Soberness?*
2. *What is it to keep our Bodies in Chastity?*
3. *What is it not to covet nor desire other Mens Goods?*
4. *What mean you when you say we must learn and labour truly to get our own Livings, &c.?*

SECTION V.

Of the LORD'S-PRAYER.

CHAP. XII.

Of the three first Petitions.

§. 1. **I** HAVE now gone through, and explained to you those three Things which our Godfathers and Godmothers promised for us when we were baptized, and which we must take Care to perform, if we expect to be saved. But you are well to observe, and take Notice of this, that we ARE NOT ABLE TO DO THESE THINGS OF OURSELVES, that is, by our own Strength, WITHOUT GOD'S SPECIAL GRACE, or Assistance; WHICH Grace therefore WE MUST LEARN AT ALL TIMES, that is, upon all suitable or fitting Occasions, TO CALL FOR BY DILIGENT PRAYER. Our Church Catechism does therefore here very wisely require of us, that we be able to SAY THE LORD'S PRAYER, which is as follows:

OUR

OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN; HALLOWED BE THY NAME: THY KINGDOM COME: THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD; AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST US: AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION; BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL: FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER AND EVER. Amen.

§. 2. THIS Prayer is, as it is here called, *The Lord's Prayer*, that is, it was made or composed by our Lord *Jesus Christ*. It consists of six general Petitions; that is, there are six general Things which we pray for in it. The *first* is, that God's NAME MAY BE HALLOWED. Now by the *Name* of God, you are to understand *God himself*, and whatsoever does more immediately relate or belong to him, as his *Word*, his *House*, his *Ministers*, his *Ordinances*, and the like. By *hallowing*, you are here to understand the *treating* or *using* any *Person*, or *Thing* after a *holy* and *religious* Manner. Wherefore, what we pray for in this Petition, is, that we and all Mankind may pay to God, and to every Person or Thing belonging to him, that Respect and Reverence which is due unto them.

§. 3. THE *second* Petition is, that God's KINGDOM may COME. Now, by God's *Kingdom*, you are to understand God's *Government*, both with Respect to his Church or People here on Earth, and also with Respect to his Kingdom of Glory hereafter. Wherefore what we ask of God in this Petition, is, that he would enlarge the Number of the true and faithful Servants of *Jesus Christ*, and make Haste to reward us all with everlasting Glory.

§. 4. THE *third* Petition is, that God's WILL may BE DONE ON EARTH; that is, that we and all Mankind may submit to, or obey God's Will, and that so far as is possible, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN, *i. e.* with the same Readiness, Constancy, and Chearfulness, wherewith it is obeyed by the *Saints* and *Angels* in Heaven.

§. 5. THESE are the three first Petitions; and the Sum and Substance of what we pray for in them all, is, THAT GOD WOULD SEND HIS GRACE UNTO US AND TO ALL PEOPLE, THAT WE MAY WORSHIP, SERVE, AND OBEY HIM AS WE OUGHT TO DO.

§. 1.

1. Are we able to fulfil these Commandments of ourselves, by our own Strength?
2. How then must we be enabled?
3. What must we do to obtain God's Grace?

§. 2.

1. Why is this Prayer called the Lord's Prayer?
2. Of how many general Petitions does it consist?
3. Which is the First?
4. What do you understand by the Name of God?
5. What do you mean by hallowing?
6. What therefore do we pray for in this Petition?

§. 3.

1. What is the Second Petition?
2. What do you understand by God's Kingdom?
3. What therefore do you ask in this Petition?

§. 4, 5.

1. *What is the Third Petition?*
2. *What do you mean when you pray that God's Will may be done in Earth as it is in Heaven?*
3. *What is the Sum and Substance of what we pray for in these three first Petitions?*

C H A P. XIII.

Of the three last Petitions.

§. 1. **T**HE *fourth* Petition is, that God would GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD, that is, that he would give us every Day what is necessary for the Support and Comfort of our Bodies. The *fifth* is, that God would FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, or Sins; which Favour we ask, and therefore can expect no otherwise, than if WE FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST, or offend US. The *sixth* and last Petition is, that God would NOT LEAD US INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL; that is, that he would preserve us from the Snares and Temptations of the Devil, and from every Thing that may be hurtful either to our Bodies or our Souls.

§. 2. THE Sum and Substance of what we pray for in these three last Petitions, our Catechism has well expressed in these Words, namely, that GOD WOULD SEND US ALL THINGS THAT BE NEEDFUL, BOTH FOR OUR SOULS AND BODIES: THAT HE WOULD BE MERCIFUL UNTO US, AND FORGIVE US OUR SINS: AND THAT IT WOULD PLEASE HIM TO SAVE AND DEFEND US IN ALL DANGERS GHOSTLY, that is, *spiritual*, AND BODILY: AND THAT HE WOULD KEEP US FROM ALL SIN AND WICKEDNESS, AND FROM OUR GHOSTLY ENEMY the Devil, AND FROM EVERLASTING DEATH.

§. 3. NOW because WE TRUST, that is, firmly believe that God OUT OF HIS INFINITE GOODNESS AND MERCY, THROUGH or for the Sake of our LORD JESUS CHRIST *will* DO THIS, that is, will grant all these Things which we have prayed for, WE THEREFORE conclude this Prayer, by SAYING AMEN, that is, SO BE IT, or so let it be unto me as I have prayed. And this we have great Reason to do, seeing we pray to GOD OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, WHO IS THE GIVER OF ALL GOODNESS, whose IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, that is, who is the King of Heaven and Earth, and can do what he pleases, and to whom therefore all Praise AND GLORY belong FOR EVER AND EVER.

§. 1.

1. *What is the Fourth Petition?*
2. *What do you mean by our daily Bread?*
3. *What is the Fifth Petition?*
4. *Upon what Condition do we ask that God would forgive us our Trespases?*
5. *What is the Sixth and last Petition?*
6. *What do you ask of God in this Petition?*

§. 2.

1. *What is the Sum and Substance of what we pray for in these three last Petitions?*
2. *What do you mean by Ghostly Dangers?*
3. *Who is our Ghostly Enemy?*

§. 3. 1. *What*

§. 3.

1. *What do you mean by Amen?*
2. *Why do you conclude this Prayer by saying Amen?*
3. *What Reason have you to believe that God of his infinite Mercy and Goodness, through our Lord Jesus Christ, will grant all these Things that you have prayed for?*

SECTION VI.

Of the SACRAMENTS.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Sacraments in general.

§. 1. **T**HE SACRAMENTS which CHRIST HAS ORDAINED, that is, commanded or appointed to be used IN HIS CHURCH, are in Number ONLY TWO: whereof BAPTISM is one, AND THE SUPPER OF THE LORD the other.

§. 2. THESE Sacraments are both of them GENERALLY NECESSARY TO SALVATION, that is, they are *most commonly*, or *for the most Part only*, necessary to Salvation. For sometimes these Sacraments are not to be had, for Want of such a Person as has Power and Authority to administer them, or by Reason of some other necessary Impediment or Hindrance; in which Case we charitably believe, that Men may be sav'd without them: But no Man can, without Hazard of his Salvation, refuse or neglect to use them, who has the Opportunity of partaking them.

§. 3. To make a Sacrament, these four Things are required, that is to say, *First*, There must be AN OUTWARD Use or Application of something to our Bodies, which is VISIBLE, that is, which may be seen with our Eyes. *Secondly*, That which is thus outwardly and visibly used or applied to our Bodies, must be used as a SIGN or Signification OF AN INWARD AND SPIRITUAL GRACE GIVEN UNTO US, that is, of some spiritual *Favour* or *Blessing* which we receive from God. *Thirdly*, The Use of this outward and visible Sign, must have been ORDAINED or commanded BY CHRIST HIMSELF. *Fourthly*, This outward and visible Sign must have been ordained AS A MEANS WHEREBY, that is, as something by Virtue whereof WE RECEIVE THE SAME spiritual Grace, AND AS A PLEDGE TO ASSURE US that we are Partakers THEREOF.

§. 4. IN a Sacrament therefore there are two Things considerable, namely; THE OUTWARD AND VISIBLE SIGN, which is *the Sacrament it self*; AND THE INWARD AND SPIRITUAL GRACE, which is *the Thing signified* by the Sacrament.

§. 1, 2.

1. *How many Sacraments has Christ ordained?*
2. *What are these two?*
3. *What mean you when you say of these Sacraments, that they are generally necessary?*
4. *May a Man be saved without the Use of the Sacraments, supposing they are not to be had?*

5. *But is there not great Danger in neglecting or refusing to make Use of them when they may be had?*

§. 3, 4.

1. *How many Things are required to make a Sacrament?*
2. *Which is the First?*
3. *What mean you by visible?*
4. *Which is the Second?*
5. *What mean you by an inward and spiritual Grace?*
6. *Which is the Third?*
7. *Which is the Fourth?*
8. *What Things are chiefly to be considered in a Sacrament?*

CHAP. XV.

Of the Sacrament of Baptism.

§. 1. **N**OW, in the first of the two Sacraments above-mentioned, namely, the Sacrament of BAPTISM, THE OUTWARD AND VISIBLE SIGN is WATER, WHEREIN, or with which, THE PERSON upon whom this Sacrament is administered, IS BAPTIZED or washed IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST: that is, when any one is baptized, he who baptizes him, either dips him in Water, or pours Water upon him, saying these Words, *I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

§. 2. THE INWARD AND SPIRITUAL GRACE, or the Thing signified by this Sacrament, IS, A DEATH UNTO a State of SIN, AND A NEW BIRTH UNTO a State of RIGHTEOUSNESS: That is, the outward washing of our Bodies with Water signifies, or represents unto us, that our Souls are now washed from the Guilt of all our past Sins, and that we are hereupon taken into a State of Favour and Acceptance with God. Which Benefit, Baptism is not only a Sign of, but actually conveys to us: FOR, whereas we were BY NATURE BORN IN SIN, AND so were THE CHILDREN OF WRATH, that is, liable to God's Anger and Displeasure, WE ARE HEREBY, that is, by being baptized, MADE THE CHILDREN OF GRACE; that is, as you have before been taught, we are taken into a Covenant of Mercy with God, and made his Children and Favourites.

§. 3. To qualify or fit PERSONS TO BE BAPTIZED, two Things are REQUIRED, namely, REPENTANCE AND FAITH. *Repentance* is that WHEREBY WE FORSAKE SIN, or the Forfaking of Sin; *Faith* is that WHEREBY WE STEDFASTLY BELIEVE, or a stedfast Belief of THE PROMISES OF GOD MADE TO US IN THAT SACRAMENT. Now, the Promises made to us in that Sacrament are in general, that if we will serve God and keep his Commandments, he will, for the Sake of Jesus Christ, pardon all our Sins, and make us Partakers of everlasting Happiness.

§. 4. BUT you will ask, If *Faith* and *Repentance* be necessary to qualify a Person to be baptized, how comes it to pass that INFANTS ARE BAPTIZED, WHEN, BY REASON OF THEIR TENDER AGE, THEY CANNOT PERFORM THEM, that is, are not capable either of *believing* or *repenting*. To which I answer, that notwithstanding all this, Infants may be baptized, BECAUSE THEY PROMISE THEM BOTH, that is, both *Faith* and *Repentance*, BY THEIR SURETIES, or their *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*: WHICH PROMISE THEY, that is, the Children THEMSELVES, WHEN THEY COME TO AGE, or Years of Discretion, ARE BOUND TO PERFORM.

§. 1, 2. 1. *What*

§. 1, 2.

1. *What is the outward and visible Sign in the Sacrament of Baptism?*
2. *How is Baptism perform'd?*
3. *What is the inward and spiritual Grace in the Sacrament of Baptism?*
4. *How do you explain this?*
5. *Does Baptism actually convey this Benefit to us?*
6. *What mean you by being the Children of Wrath?*
7. *What by being the Children of Grace?*

§. 3, 4.

1. *What is required to qualify or fit Persons for Baptism?*
2. *What is Repentance?*
3. *What is Faith?*
4. *What are the Promises made to us in this Sacrament?*
5. *But if Repentance and Faith be necessary to qualify Persons for Baptism; how then comes it to pass that Infants are baptized, who by Reason of their tender Age are not capable either of believing or repenting?*
6. *What do Infants promise by their Sureties?*
7. *Who are these Sureties?*
8. *Are Infants bound to perform what their Godfathers and Godmothers promise for them?*
9. *When are they bound to perform this?*

C H A P. XVI.

Of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

§. 1. **T**HE other Sacrament is that of the LORD'S SUPPER, which WAS ORDAINED FOR THE CONTINUAL REMEMBRANCE, that is, that we might continually be put in Mind OF THE SACRIFICE OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST, AND OF THE BENEFITS WHICH WE RECEIVE THEREBY, that is, by that Sacrifice.

§. 2. THE OUTWARD and visible SIGN in this Sacrament, is BREAD AND WINE, WHICH we therefore eat and drink, because the LORD Jesus Christ HATH COMMANDED them TO BE RECEIVED, that is, to be *eat* and *drank* in Remembrance of him. The INWARD *Thing*, or that which is SIGNIFIED, or represented by this Sacrament, is THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST, WHICH, as to the Fruits or Effects thereof, ARE VERILY AND INDEED TAKEN AND RECEIVED IN THE LORD'S SUPPER.

§. 3. THE Body and Blood of *Christ*, I say, are received in the Lord's Supper only as to the *Fruits* or *Effects* thereof: For you must not suppose that we do with our Mouths eat the *real Flesh*, and drink the *real Blood* of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*. No, what we *eat* is *Bread*, and what we *drink* is *Wine*: and by doing this according to Christ's Commandment, in Remembrance of his Death and Sufferings, all the Benefits which he thereby purchased, are made sure, and conveyed to us. For Instance, we obtain Pardon and Forgiveness of all our past Offences; we obtain likewise the Grace or Assistance of God's Spirit, by which our SOULS ARE STRENGTHENED AND REFRESHED, in like Manner AS OUR BODIES ARE strengthened and refreshed BY THE BREAD AND WINE.

§. 4. THESE are THE BENEFITS WHEREOF WE ARE PARTAKERS by this Sacrament; which *Benefits*, however, are not bestowed upon all who may chance

OF CONFIRMATION.

to receive it, but only upon the FAITHFUL, that is, upon those who receive it *worthily*. Now to qualify Men to receive this Sacrament *worthily*, it is REQUIRED that they EXAMINE THEMSELVES, *First*, WHETHER THEY REPENT THEM TRULY OF THEIR FORMER SINS, AND STEDFASTLY PURPOSE TO LEAD A NEW LIFE. *Secondly*, Whether they HAVE A LIVELY FAITH in GOD'S MERCY to Mankind, THROUGH the Merits and Satisfaction of Jesus CHRIST, together WITH A THANKFUL REMEMBRANCE OF HIS DEATH. *Thirdly*, Whether they BE IN CHARITY WITH ALL MEN, that is, whether they do not wish or design Hurt to any Man, but are disposed or ready to do Good to all Men, Enemies as well as Friends. If they have all these Qualifications, they are fit to receive this Sacrament, and not otherwise.

§. 1, 2.

1. *For what End was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?*
2. *What is the outward and visible Sign in this Sacrament?*
3. *Why do we eat Bread and drink Wine in Remembrance of Christ?*
4. *What is the inward Part or Thing signified by this Sacrament?*
5. *Are the Body and Blood of Christ verily and indeed taken and received in the Lord's Supper?*
6. *How are they verily and indeed taken and received?*

§. 3, 4.

1. *Do we in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper with our Mouths eat the real Flesh, and drink the real Blood, of our Saviour Jesus Christ?*
2. *What then do we eat and drink?*
3. *What do we gain by doing this?*
4. *Explain this to me more particularly.*
5. *Are these Benefits bestowed upon all who at any Time receive the Lord's Supper?*
6. *Who are the Faithful?*
7. *What is required in Order to a worthy Receiving of the Lord's Supper?*
8. *In what Particulars ought a Man to examine himself?*
9. *What is it to be in Charity with all Men?*
10. *Are we fit to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper if any of these Qualifications be wanting?*

SECTION VII.

OF CONFIRMATION.

CHAP. XVII.

§. 1. **I** HAVE now explained to you the CATECHISM of the Church of England; which Catechism EVERY PERSON is required TO LEARN BEFORE HE BE BROUGHT TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE BISHOP; and confirmed every Person ought to be, before he offers himself at the Lord's Table; our Church having expressly enjoined, that *none shall be admitted to the holy Communion*, that is, suffered to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, *untill such Time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.*

§. 2. THE Reason why it is necessary that every Person should learn this Catechism before he be brought to be confirmed, you will easily understand, when you are taught what it is that every one promises at the Time when he is confirmed, which is the very same Thing that his Godfathers and Godmothers did

did before promise for him when he was baptized. For when any one comes to be confirmed by the Bishop, the Bishop asks him, *Whether he does in the Presence of God, and of the Congregation then present, renew the solemn Promise and Vow that was made in his Name at his Baptism, ratifying and confirming the same Promise and Vow in his own Person, &c.* To which Question the Person to be confirmed answers, *I do.* Wherefore, seeing every Person, when he comes to be confirmed, does promise for himself, that which his Godfathers and Godmothers promised for him when he was baptized; and seeing no Man can promise any Thing without understanding, first of all, what that is which he promises: it is therefore necessary that this Catechism, which instructs us what that is which our Godfathers and Godmothers promised for us, when we were baptized, should be learned by every one before he be brought to be confirmed.

§. 3. THE Persons who are brought to be confirmed, having thus promised that they will perform what their Godfathers and Godmothers before promised for them, the Bishop after this *confirms* them, that is, he lays his Hands upon them; and prays to God to give them his Grace to enable them to do as they have promised, saying these Words, *Defend, O Lord, these thy Servants with thy heavenly Grace, that they may continue thine for ever, and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit, more and more, until they come to thine everlasting Kingdom.*

§. 1, 2, 3.

1. *Is every Person to learn this Catechism before he be brought to be confirmed?*
2. *Ought every one to be confirmed before he receives the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?*
3. *Why so?*
4. *What does every Person promise when he is confirmed?*
5. *What does the Bishop ask the Person to be confirmed?*
6. *What Answer does the Person to be confirmed make to the Bishop?*
7. *What does the Bishop do after this?*
8. *How does the Bishop confirm any Person?*
9. *In what Words does the Bishop pray?*

The End of the First Part.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTED.

PART II.

Wherein the several Points of DOCTRINE contained in the foregoing EXPOSITION, are confirmed by TEXTS of SCRIPTURE.

[Note, That the Chapters in this Second Part are numbered according, and answer exactly to the Chapters in the First.]

CHAP. I.

POINTS.

1. **T**HAT Baptism makes us Members of Christ. 2. That every Member of Christ is a Child of God. 3. That every Child of God is an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.

PROOFS.

Joh. i. 12. *As many as (a) received him, to them (b) gave he Power to become the Sons of God.*

Matt. xxviii. 19. *Go ye, and (c) teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Eph. v. 30. *(d) We are Members of his Body.*

Rom. viii. 16, 17. *We are the Children of God; And if Children, then Heirs.*

CHAP. II.

POINTS.

1. **T**HAT we must renounce the Devil and all his Works. 2. That we must renounce the Poms and Vanities of the World. 3. And also the sinful Lusts of the Flesh.

PROOFS.

1. Joh. ii. 15. *(e) Love not the World, neither the Things that are in the World; if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.*

(a) *Received him.*) Embraced the Faith of Christ, became *Profelytes* to him by Baptism, and so were Members of his Body. (b) *Gave he Power, &c.*) They thereby became the Sons of God. (c) *Teach.*) Make *Disciples* or *Profelytes* by baptizing. (d) *We are*) All we who are Christians, i. e. have been made *Profelytes* to Christ by Baptism. See Gal. iii. 27.

(e) *Love not.*) Do not love the World so much as, for the Sake of any Thing therein, to commit *Wickedness*.

Jam.

Jam. iv. 7. (a) *Resist the Devil.* Eph. v. 11. *Have no Fellowship with the (b) unfruitful (c) Works of Darknes.*

Rom. viii. 13. *If ye (d) live after the Flesh, (e) ye shall die.* Chap. xiii. 14. *Make not Provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof.*

P O I N T S.

4. THAT we must believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. 5. That we must keep God's Commandments. 6. That it is owing to the free Mercy of God through Jesus Christ, that he is pleased to give us the Kingdom of Heaven upon our Performance of these Conditions.

P R O O F S.

Tit. iii. 5. *Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us.* Rom. vi. 23. *The Gift of God is eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Joh. iii. 36. *He that (f) believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall (g) not see Life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him.*

Matt. xix. 17. *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.*

C H A P. III.

P O I N T S.

1. **T**HAT God was the Maker of Heaven and Earth. 2. That he is a Spirit. 3. That he is everlasting. 4. That he is Almighty.

P R O O F S.

Pf. xc. 2. *From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.*

Heb. iii. 4. *He that built all Things, is God.*

Matt. xix. 26. *With God all Things are possible.*

Joh. iv. 24. *God is a Spirit.* 1 Tim. vi. 16. *Whom no Man hath seen, nor can see.*

P O I N T S.

5. THAT God is most wise. 6. Most just. 7. Most holy. 8. Most merciful. 9. But one.

P R O O F S.

Dan. ix. 14. *The Lord our God is righteous in all his Works which he doth.*

Heb. iv. 13. *All Things are naked and opened to the Eyes of him.* 1 Chron. xxviii.

9. *The Lord searcheth all Hearts, and understandeth all the Imaginations.*

1 Cor. viii. 4. *There is none other God but one.*

Pf. lxxxvi. 15. *God is full of Compassion, and gracious; long suffering, and plentiful in Mercy.*

Hab. i. 13. *God is of purer Eyes (h) than to behold Evil, and cannot look at Iniquity.*

(a) *Resist.*) Do not yield to his Temptations. (b) *Unfruitful.*) Wicked. (c) *Works of Darknes.*) Works of the Devil, who is the Prince of Darknes. (d) *Live after the Flesh.*) Fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh. (e) *Ye shall die.*) Ye shall be damned everlastingly.

(f) *Believeth on the Son.*) i. e. So believeth on him, as to embrace his Doctrines. (g) *Not see Life.*) Shall not be saved.

(h) *Than to behold Evil.*) i. e. Than to look upon it with any Sort of Liking or Approbation.

CHAP. IV.

POINTS.

1. **T**HAT Jesus Christ is the only Son of God. 2. That he was conceived by the Holy Ghost. 3. That he was born of the Virgin Mary. 4. That he suffered under Pontius Pilate.

PROOFS.

Matt. i. 18, 25. *The Birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise. When as his Mother Mary (a) was espoused to Joseph, before they (b) came together, she was found with Child ——— and he (Joseph) (c) knew her not till she had brought forth her first born Son, and he called his Name Jesus.*

Matt. viii. 20. *The Son of Man (d) hath not where to lay his Head.* Luk. iv. 29. *His own Countrey-Men led him to the Brow of the Hill whereon their City was built, that they might cast him down headlong.* Matt. xxvii. 26. to 34. *Pilate (e) scourged Jesus. The Soldiers (f) platted a Crown of Thorns, and put it on his Head; stripped him, spit upon him, smote him on the Head, and mocked him.*

Matt. i. 20. *The Angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph, saying, Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy Wife; for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.*

Luke i. 35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, (Mary) and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also (g) that holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* Joh. iii. 18. *Jesus calls himself, The only begotten Son of God.*

POINTS.

5. **T**HAT Jesus Christ was crucified. 6. That he died. 7. That he was buried. 8. That he rose again from the Dead.

PROOFS.

Matt. xxvii. 50. *Jesus when he had cried with a loud Voice, (h) gave up the Ghost.*

Matt. xxvii. 33, 35. *And when they were come unto a Place called Golgotha ——— they crucified him.*

Matt. xxviii. 5, 6. *And the Angel ——— said unto the Women, ——— I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified; he is not here, for he is risen.* Mark xvi. 9, 14. *When Jesus was risen, ——— he appeared first to Mary Magdalen, ——— afterward he appeared unto the Eleven, as they sat at Meat.*

Mark xv. 43, 46. *Joseph of Arimathea ——— came ——— unto Pilate, and craved the Body of Jesus, ——— and he took him down, and ——— laid him in a (i) Sepulchre.*

POINTS.

9. **T**HAT Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at God's Right Hand. 10. That he shall come from thence. 11. And shall judge the Quick and the Dead.

PROOFS.

Mark xvi. 19. *So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into Heaven, and sat on the Right Hand of God.*

2 Cor. v. 10. *For we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may (k) receive the Things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

1 Thess. iv. 16. *The Lord (Jesus) himself shall descend from Heaven.*

(a) Was espoused.) i. e. Contracted, or, as we say, made sure to Joseph. (b) Came together.) Were married. (c) Knew her not.) Did not lie with her.

(d) Hath not where to lay his Head.) Jesus was so poor, that he had scarce a House to hide himself in. (e) Scourged.) Whipped. (f) Platted.) Made.

(g) That holy Thing.) That holy Child.

(h) Gave up the Ghost.) Resigned his Soul to God. Died.

(i) Sepulchre.) Grave.

(k) May receive the Things done in his Body.) i. e. May be rewarded as he deserves.

CHAP. V.

POINTS.

1. **T**HAT the Holy Ghost is a Person. 2. That he is a Person distinct from the Father and the Son. 3. That he is God.

PROOFS.

Acts v. 3, 4. Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine Heart, to lye to the Holy Ghost? — Thou hast not lyed unto Men, but unto God.

Joh. xiv. 26. The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, — shall teach you all Things. Chap. xvi. 8, 13. And when he (the Holy Ghost) is come, he will reprove the World of Sin — He will guide you into all Truth — He will shew you Things to come.

Joh. xv. 26. When the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

POINTS.

4. THAT there always has been, from the Beginning of the Gospel, and to the End of the World always will be, a Catholick Church. 5. That this Catholick Church consists, or is made up, of many Members, united or joined together in one Body or Society, under Christ the Head, or supreme Law-giver. 6. That the Band of Union, or that by which these Members are united into one Body or Society, is, their professing the same Faith, and being subject to the same spiritual Laws.

PROOFS.

1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. As the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body being many, are one Body; so also is (a) Christ. For, by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body. Eph. i. 22, 23. The Church, which is his (Christ's) Body. Chap. v. 23. Christ is the Head of the Church.

Ephes. iv. 3, 4, 5. Keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism. 1 Cor. i. 10. I beseech you, Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same Thing, and that there be no Divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment.

Matt. xvi. 18. Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and (b) the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

POINTS.

7. THAT through the Merits of Jesus Christ, God will forgive us our Sins, if we repent. 8. That the Bodies of all those who are dead, and shall die, shall come to Life again. 9. That good Men shall, after the Resurrection, live for ever in a State of Happiness, and the Wicked in a State of Misery.

PROOFS.

Matt. xxv. 46. And these (the Wicked) shall go away into everlasting Punishment; but the Righteous into Life eternal.

(a) Christ.) The Church of Christ.

(b) The Gates of Hell shall not prevail.) The Devil shall not be able with all his Power to destroy it.

Ephes. i. 7, 8. *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins.* Act. iii. 19. *Repent,—and be converted, that your Sins may be (a) blotted out.*

Joh. v. 28, 29. *The Hour is coming, in the which all that are in the Graves shall hear his (Christ's) Voice, and shall (b) come forth.* Act. xxiv. 15. *There shall be a Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and Unjust.*

CHAP. VI.

POINTS.

1. **T**HAT there was with God, from all Eternity, a certain Person called the WORD, which *Word was* and is GOD. 2. That this *Word* was *made Flesh*, that is, was joined to the Man Christ Jesus, who thereby became both God and Man in one Person. 3. That though the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God; yet there are not three Gods, but one God.

PROOFS.

Joh. i. 14. *And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.*

Joh. i. 1, 3. (c) *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made that was made.*

1 Joh. v. 7. *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.* 1 Cor. viii. 4. *There is none other God but one.*

POINTS.

4. **T**HAT Jesus Christ suffered and died, to redeem Mankind from eternal Death. 5. That by his Death and Sufferings, he hath made a full Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World; so that every Man's Sins shall be forgiven him, and he shall have eternal Life, if he believes in Christ, and obeys his Commandments. 6. That no Man can believe in Christ, and obey his Commandments, without the Grace or Assistance of God's Spirit. 7. That God will give sufficient Grace to all who ask him for it.

PROOFS.

Coloss. i. 19, to 23. *It pleased the Father, that in him (Christ) should all Fullness dwell; and (having made Peace through the Blood of his Cross) by him to reconcile (d) all Things to himself. — And you that were some Time — Enemies in your Mind, by wicked Works, yet now hath he reconciled in the Body of his Flesh through Death, to present you holy and unblameable — in his Sight, if ye continue in the Faith, — and be not moved away from the Hope of the Gospel.* Vers. 14. *In whom, (Christ) we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins.* Joh. vi. 40. *And this is the Will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting Life.* Matt. xix. 17. *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.*

Luk. xi. 13. *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

Mark x. 45. (e) *The Son of Man came — to give his Life a Ransom (f) for many.*

(a) *Blotted out.*) Forgiven. (b) *Come forth*) Come to Life again.

(c) *In the Beginning.*) From all Eternity.

(d) *All Things.*) All Mankind.

(e) *The Son of Man.*) Jesus Christ. (f) *For many.*) For all.

1 Tim. ii. 6. Jesus Christ gave himself a Ransom for all. 1 Joh. ii. 1, 2. Jesus Christ — is the Propitiation — for the Sins of the whole World.

Joh. vi. 44. No Man can (a) come to me, except the Father which hath sent me (b) draw him. 2 Cor. iii. 5. Our (c) Sufficiency is of God. Joh. xv. 5. Without me ye can do (d) Nothing.

CHAP. VII.

POINTS.

1. **T**HAT we must not deny the Being of a God. 2. That we must not blaspheme God. 3. That we must not pay religious Worship to any but God.

PROOFS.

Rom. i. 20. The (c) invisible Things of him, (God) from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, — even his eternal Power and Godhead, — so that (f) they are without Excuse. Ps. xiv. 1. The (g) Fool hath said in his Heart, There is no God.

Matt. iv. 10. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Deut. vi. 13. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and (h) shalt swear by his Name. Coloss. ii. 18. Let no Man beguile you of your Reward in — worshipping of Angels.

Matt. xv. 19, 20. Out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, — Blasphemies: These are the Things which defile a Man. Levit. xxiv. 16. He that blasphemeth the Name of the Lord, shall surely be put to Death.

POINTS.

4. **T**HAT we must not use God's Name lightly and wantonly, by crying out, O Lord, O God, &c. at every Turn. 5. That we must not curse. 6. That we must not swear falsely. 7. Nor vainly.

PROOFS.

Matt. v. 34, 37. Swear (i) not at all, — but let your Communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay.

Ps. cxi. 9. Holy and (k) Reverend is his Name.

Levit. xix. 12. Ye shall not swear by my Name falsely. Matt. v. 33. Thou shalt not forswear thy self.

Rom. xii. 14. Bless, and curse not.

CHAP. IX.

POINTS.

1. **T**HAT we must fear God. 2. That we must love God. 3. That we must pray to God. 4. That we must give Thanks to God. 5. That we must trust in God. 6. That we must diligently read and obey his Word.

(a) Come to me.) Believe in me. (b) Draw him.) Bring him by his Grace. (c) Sufficiency.) Power to do our Duty. (d) Nothing.) No good Thing.

(e) Invisible Things.) Such Things as are not to be seen, as the Godhead, or Divine Being, which no Man hath seen, or can see. (f) They are without Excuse.) Those who deny God, are most desperately wicked. (g) Fool.) Wicked Man. (h) Shalt swear.) When thou swearest, thou must swear by him, and by him only.

(i) Not at all.) Not at all in your ordinary Discourse or Communication. (k) Reverend.) To be honoured or revered.

P R O O F S.

Phil. iv. 6. *Be (a) careful for Nothing, but in every Thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God.*

1 Pet. ii. 17. *Fear God.*

Eph. v. 20. *Giving Thanks always for all Things unto God.*

Mark xii. 30. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and with all thy Mind, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength.*

Deut. vi. 6, 7. *And these Words which I command thee ——— shall be in thine Heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children; and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine House, and when thou walkest by the Way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.* Jam. i. 22. *Be ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only.*

Isa. xxvi. 4. *Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting Strength.*

C H A P. X.

P O I N T S.

1. **T**HAT we must love our Neighbour as our selves. 2. That we must do unto all Men as we would they should do unto us. 3. That we must hurt no Body. 4. That we must be true and just in our Dealings.

P R O O F S.

Luk. iii. 14. (b) *Do Violence to no Man.*

Rom. xiii. 7. *Render ——— to all their Dues.* 1 Thes. iv. 6. ——— *Let no Man (c) go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any Matter.*

Jam. ii. 8. *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* Matt. xxii. 39.

Matt. vii. 12. *All Things whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.*

P O I N T S.

5. THAT we must not bear Malice. 6. That we must not steal. 7. That we must not speak Evil. 8. That we must not lye. 9. Nor slander.

P R O O F S.

Eph. iv. 32. *Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another.* Col. iii. 8. *Put off all these, Anger, Wrath, Malice.*

Luk. iii. 14. *Neither accuse any falsely.*

Eph. iv. 28. *Let him that stole, steal no more.*

Eph. iv. 25. *Putting away Lying, speak every Man Truth with his Neighbour.*

Col. iii. 9. *Lie not one to another.* Rev. xxi. 8. *All Lyars shall have their Part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone.*

Jam. iv. 11. *Speak not Evil one of another.*

(a) *Careful.*) Anxious, solicitous, over-careful.

(b) *Do Violence.*) Hurt no Man. (c) *Go beyond.*) Over-reach, cheat.

C H A P. XI.

P O I N T S.

1. **T**HAT we must love, honour, and succour our Fathers and Mothers.
2. That we must honour and obey the King, and all in Authority.
3. That we must submit ourselves to our Governors, Teachers, spiritual Pastors, and Masters.
4. That we must order ourselves lowly and reverently to all our Betters.

P R O O F S.

1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. *Submit yourselves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake; whether it be to the King as supreme, or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the Punishment of evil Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.*

1. Pet. ii. 17. *Honour (a) all Men.* Rom. xiii. 7. *Render — to all their Dues, — Honour to whom Honour.*

Eph. vi. 1. *Children, obey your Parents.* 1 Tim. v. 4. *Let (Children) learn to shew (b) Piety at Home, and (c) requite their Parents, for that is good and acceptable before God.*

Heb. xiii. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit yourselves.* Eph. vi. 5, 6. *Servants be obedient to them that are your Masters, — not with (d) Eye-Service, as Men-pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the Heart.*

P O I N T S.

5. THAT we must keep our Bodies in Temperance and Soberness.
6. And also in Chastity.
7. That we must learn and labour truly to get our own Living, and to do our Duty in that State of Life unto which it shall please God to call us.

P R O O F S.

Eph. iv. 28. *Let (every Man) labour, working with his Hands.* 1 Thes. iv. 11. *Study to be quiet, and to do your own Business, and to work with your own Hands.*

1 Cor. vi. 18. *Flee Fornication.* 1. Thes. iv. 7. *God hath not called us unto Uncleaness, but unto Holiness.* Eph. v. 5. *No Whoremonger, nor unclean Person — hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ.* Chap. iv. 29. *Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouth.*

2 Pet. i. 5, 6. *Add — to Knowledge Temperance.* 1. Pet. iv. 7. *Be — sober.* Luke xxi. 34. *Take Heed to yourselves, lest at any Time your Hearts be over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness.* 1 Tim. ii. 8, 9. *I will — that (e) Women adorn themselves in modest Apparel, — not with broided Hair, or Gold, or Pearls, or costly Array.* Prov. xx. 13. *(f) Love not Sleep, lest thou come to Poverty.*

C H A P. XIV, and XV.

P O I N T S.

1. **T**HAT Water-Baptism is an Ordinance appointed by Christ himself, and therefore necessary to Salvation, where it may lawfully be had.
2. That all Men are by Nature the Children of Wrath.
3. That by Baptism they

(a) *All Men.*) All to whom Honour is due.

(b) *Piety.*) Piety towards Parents, includes all Instances of Love and Duty: But in this Place it principally respects the Duty of succouring them, *i. e.* of relieving them under their Necessities.

(c) *Requite.*) Make suitable Returns for what their Parents did for them when they were unable to help themselves.

(d) *Eye-Service.*) Eye-Service is when Servants do their Master's Business, not out of a Sense that it is their Duty, but lest they should be punish'd for their Neglect.

(e) *Women.*) The same Rule holds as well for Men.

(f) *Love not Sleep.*) Do not indulge thy self immoderately therein.

are made the Children of Grace. 4. That Faith and Repentance are necessary to qualify those for Baptism, who are capable of believing and repenting. 5. That Infants are capable of being taken into Covenant with God, and therefore may be baptized, though they can neither believe nor repent. 6. That Infants being come to Age, are bound to believe and repent, otherwise they will reap no Advantage from their Baptism.

P R O O F S.

Eph. ii. 3. *We—were by Nature the Children of Wrath, even as others.* Rom. iii. 23. *All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God.* 1 Cor. xv. 22. (a) *In Adam all die.*

Acts ii. 38. *Repent and be baptized.* Chap. viii. 37. *If thou believest with all thine Heart thou mayest (be baptized.)*

Joh. iii. 5. *Except a Man be (b) born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Mark. xvi. 16. *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.*

Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12. *Ye stand this Day all of you before the Lord—your Captains—your little ones,—that thou shouldst enter into Covenant with the Lord.* Gen. xvii. 14. *The uncircumcised Man-Child—shall be (c) cut off from his People; he hath broken my Covenant.*

For the Proof of the third Point, see Chap. 1. and for the sixth, see Chap. 2.

C H A P. XVI.

P O I N T S.

1. **T**HAT Jesus Christ has commanded us to eat Bread, and drink Wine in Remembrance of his Death and Passion. 2. That this Ordinance was intended by him to be continued to the End of the World; and that therefore no Man, who may have it lawfully administered to him, can neglect or refuse it, without Hazard of his Salvation. 3. That there is great Danger in receiving this Sacrament unworthily. 4. That to qualify or fit any Man to receive this Sacrament worthily, it is necessary that he examine himself.

P R O O F S.

1 Cor. xi. 23, 24, 25. *The Lord Jesus the same Night in which he was betrayed, took Bread; and when he had given Thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, (d) This is my Body, which is broken for you; this do in Remembrance of me. After the same Manner also he took the Cup when he had supped, saying, This Cup is (e) the New Testament in my Blood; this do ye, as oft as ye shall drink it, in Remembrance of me.*

Ver. 27. *Whosoever shall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, (f) shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.* Ver. 29. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, (g) not discerning the Lord's Body.*

Ver. 26. *As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew (forth) the Lord's Death, (h) till he come.*

Ver. 28. *Let a Man (i) examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.*

(a) *In Adam.*) By the Sin of Adam, all became subject to Death.

(b) *Born of Water.*) Baptized with Water.

(c) *Cut off from his People.*) Shall die.

(d) *This is my Body.*) This signifies or represents my Body.

(e) *The New Testament.*) Signifies or represents the New Covenant of Mercy procured by my Blood.

(f) *Shall be guilty.*) He will, by so doing, shew a Contempt of the Body and Blood of Christ.

(g) *Not discerning.*) Not using the Body and Blood of Christ after a holy and reverent Manner.

(h) *Till he come.*) Till he comes to Judgment. (i) *Examine.*) Try and consider whether he be a holy Person.



THE EXCELLENCY OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF
CHRIST JESUS.

A
S E R M O N

PREACH'D at the
PARISH-CHURCH
OF

REDGRAVE in SUFFOLK,

On SUNDAY *Feb.* 26, 17⁴⁰₂₁.

By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.



THE EXCELLENCY OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF

CHRIST

SEE R M O N

PARISH-CHURCH

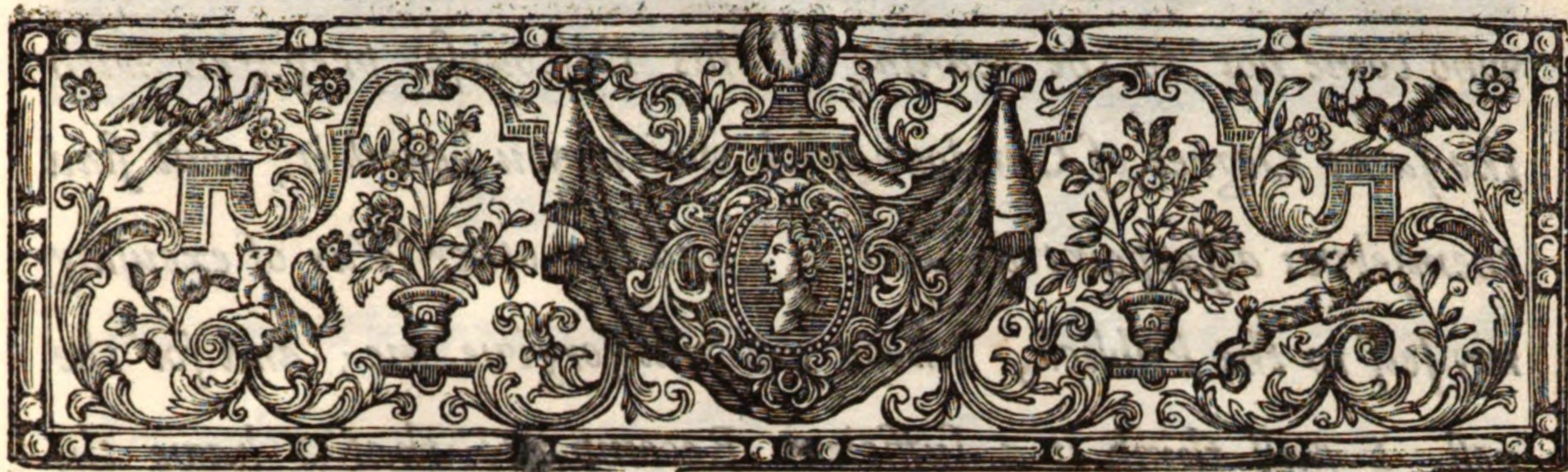
REDEGRAVE in SUFFOLK

On Sunday, the 12th

By H. H. H. H. H.

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FOR A



T O

JOHN HOLT, Esq;

SIR,

IF there had been a Variety of Methods before me, by which I might have obliged you, and I had been left to my own Determination, the publishing this Discourse would not, I do assure you, have been among the first that I should have chosen. For in Truth I can have little Reason to think that I shall do the World a Pleasure, by offering my hasty Thoughts upon a Subject which has so often employed the Pens of the best Writers. But there are so few Instances in which I find it in my Power to make my self acceptable, that I could not permit my self to deliberate; nor indeed could I see how I should be able to justify my self in denying your first Request, who have so great a Right at all Times to command me. To make use of YOUR Name, Sir, is a Liberty which I ought not on this Occasion to have taken without Necessity; and I am sensible, that the doing it may be a Means to raise Expectations, in which those

DEDICATION.

who come not to the reading of this Discourse, prepared with the same Degree of Candour with which you heard it, will find themselves disappointed. But as I had no other Way of excusing my self to the Publick, I hope you will forgive me; and for the rest, I shall think it a sufficient Recompence that I have the Honour to be,

S I R,

Your most obliged, and

most obedient Servant,

HENRY STEBBING.

PHILIP.



PHILIP. III. vii, viii.

But what Things were Gain to me, those I counted Loss for Christ.

Yea doubtless, and I count all Things Loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

FOR the understanding the true Intent and Meaning of these Words, we need look no farther back than to the Verses immediately foregoing, where the Apostle has laid before us a compendious Account of the Advantages he was under whilst he was a *Jew*. Ver. 5, 6. *Circumcised the eighth Day, of the Stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the Law, a Pharisee: Concerning Zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the Righteousness which is in the Law, blameless.* Upon which Account he declares (Ver. 4.) that if there were any Merit to be pleaded, any Good to be obtained by being a *Jew*, no Man had greater Pretensions than himself. *But what Things* (says he) *were Gain to me* (i. e. those Things which I, whilst I was a *Jew*, did reckon or esteem to be Gain) *I have accounted Loss for Christ*; so far have I been from placing any Confidence upon them, or ascribing to them any real Worth or Excellency, that with Respect to the present Advantages I am under, I have looked upon them as nothing, or even as worse than nothing. *Yea doubtless, and I count all Things but Loss*; I have the same Opinion of every Privilege, and every Qualification, I have heretofore attained, or may hereafter attain unto; I count them all, I say, as nothing in Comparison to *the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*

THE Words then do very plainly set forth to us the great and transcendent Excellency of the Christian Religion, concerning which a few Observations will not, I hope, be unseasonable. For the more we are persuaded of the Excellency of our Religion, the more satisfied shall we be in the Wisdom of our Choice, and the more strongly excited to the Practice of that Piety and Virtue which our Religion recommends and engages us to. Now I do not purpose to trouble you with a nice and exact Calculation of the Difference in Point of real Worth between *Christianity* and *Judaism*, nor between *Christianity* and any other Way or Method of Religion which the Providence of God hath heretofore thought fit to appoint, or which Men have superstitiously invented to themselves; it will be as much as the Time before me will allow, and withal as much as the present Occasion seems to require, to shew you in general wherein the Excellency of *Christianity* does principally consist, by which Means you will easily be able to judge how far it surpasses any other Religion which shall offer it self to stand in Competition with it.

To determine rightly then concerning this Matter, it will be necessary to consider what is the great and ultimate End of all Religion; for that which best answers its End is always most excellent, supposing that the End it self be so. Now Religion has the same End which all other Things have that are desirable, to wit, the Happiness of those who follow after it. It is usually said indeed that the Glory of God is the End of all Religion, which is also true. But the Happiness of Man is the End even of the Glory of God, or rather it is it self the Glory of God; for God is glorified by the Happiness of

his Creatures. We glorify God by obeying his Laws, for this is an Acknowledgment of his Sovereignty over us. But why doth God give us Laws, unless it be that he may lead us to Happiness? Why doth he require Obedience, but that we may obtain a Benefit by discharging our Duty? That Religion therefore which shews the easiest and the surest Way to the best and truest Happiness, must needs be the most excellent; and the Excellency of *Christianity* appears in all these Respects, *viz.*

FIRST, In the *Nature* of that Happiness which it proposeth.

SECONDLY, In the *Certainty* which it gives us of that Happiness. And,

THIRDLY, In the *Means* which it prescribes for the Attainment of it.

FIRST, I say, *Christianity* is the most excellent Religion in this Respect, that it proposeth to us the best and the truest Happiness, which will appear by considering, that as to its Kind, it is adapted to the most excellent Faculty in ourselves (I mean the reasonable Soul) and that as to its Duration or Continuance, it will be for ever. Of this Sort of Happiness we have a good deal of Experience in this Life, enough, if we value it as it deserves, to make us fond and eager after more. And more, yea infinitely more, *shall be given to those for whom it is prepared, i. e.* to all who will prepare and qualify themselves for it, when having laid aside the Clogs and Incumbrances of Flesh and Blood, they shall arise purified into a divine and angelick Nature. In what the Happiness of a Future State does consist, we cannot particularly say; the Scripture has described it to us in general only, as a State wherein are Joys without Measure as well as without End, and this by the Images and Representations of Things most eligible in this Life, as a *Kingdom*, a *Crown*, and the like. The Reason of which (if we may presume to look so far into the Secrets of the Almighty) may be, partly because the Praise of Vertue would have been a great deal less (or rather no Praise at all would have been due to it) if God had given us a full and entire Prospect of the heavenly Glories; and partly because *this Knowledge is in it self too wonderful and excellent* for us, such I mean as is not suited to our present Capacities and Apprehensions. But whatever the Reason of this is, or how much soever we may be in the Dark as to the Particulars of the Happiness of a Life to come, this we are sure of, *viz.* that it shall be without the least Mixture of Sensuality. We shall then be pure Reason; our Happiness therefore must be purely rational; for there can be no sensual Pleasure where there are no sensual Desires to gratify.

BUT this which I am now mentioning as the Excellency of the Christian's Happiness, may perhaps appear to some as one of the greatest Objections against it. And here indeed lies the main Difficulty, to give Men addicted to Sense even a Notion or Idea of Happiness, distinct from and superior to that of Sense. Such as these will be apt to say, "Away with your Pleasures beyond the Grave, and Dreams of a Kingdom we know not what. Why, hath not God prepared for us an earthly Paradise, wherein we should have Appetites that would never cloy, and no Want of any Thing to gratify them? How much better would it have been, if we had been suffered to eat and drink and sport our selves through endless Ages, than to die, and awake again to new Delights, whercof we hear much Talk indeed, but have no Experience?" Thus Children cry for Toys, because they have no Knowledge of better Things! But if you would know why God hath not thus dealt with us, remember that he hath made us reasonable Creatures; and when you have well considered this, you will not find it, I believe, so hard to understand that there may be, yea, that in the Nature of the Thing there must be a Happiness peculiar to us as such, which not only equals, but as far exceeds
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that which is proper to the Animal Life, as Reason it self is more excellent than Sense. Every distinct Order of Beings that are capable of Happiness (nay, I had almost said every distinct Being of the same Species) has a Sort of Pleasure peculiar to it self, arising from something that is peculiar in the Frame and Constitution of it. The manly Entertainments of a mature Age are not the same with the little Divertisements of Youth or Childhood; nor are the Pleasures of a Child the same with the Pleasures of a Worm, or of a Snail. Something I say there is peculiar in each, which as it is more or less removed from Reason, makes them comparatively, or with Respect to one another, more or less excellent. Now we should consider our selves whilst we are in this Vail of Flesh as in a State of Childhood or Infancy; or to come as near to the Thing as possible (which no Comparison you can frame will fully express) we should consider our selves as imprison'd in the Womb, when our Faculties are as it were bound up, and not wide enough to admit of that Fullness of Joy which will flow in upon us when through Death we shall be born to a State of Immortality.

IN short, if that Superiority which we stand in with Respect to the several Orders of Creatures below us (of which we are all of us apt to have Apprehensions large enough; if this, I say) be founded in Reason, it must then be plain and evident to us all, that the best and truest Happiness is that which is proper to Reason; and consequently that our Happiness must be so much the more perfect and compleat, by how much the more it is purged from the Mixture of Sense. And what, I pray, is the infinite Happiness of God, but the Happiness of infinite Reason? But if nothing but Experience will satisfy, this is what we desire to appeal to. For, as I said before, there is enough of this Sort of Happiness to be met with on this Side the Grave, to give us at least a Notion of it; and 'tis often experienced even by such as will not be at the Pains of being religious. For what is that Satisfaction which a Man feels within himself in the Pursuit and Acquisition of Knowledge, which more or less every Art, every Science yields? Is not this a Pleasure distinct from, and very often superior to that of Sense? But indeed the true Way to make the Experiment is to become good, by which to all the several Ways of gratifying our Reason, we shall add this, which will minister to us the greatest and most lasting Comfort of all, I mean the Sense of our having acted wisely in the most important Concern; the Sense of our having shewn our selves grateful to our best and only Benefactor, and of our having secured to our selves hereby an everlasting Interest in his Favour, which is more to us than all the World. Now these are but the Foretastes of those Joys which shall hereafter *be revealed in us*; and how much even these exceed the Satisfaction of Sense, is a Thing which those who have tried do find to their unspeakable Benefit, how hardly soever those who have not had the Experience may be brought to believe it. A good Man has this Advantage, that by what he has tasted of sensual Pleasures within those Limits which Reason allows, he understands what they are, and so is qualified to judge of the Difference. But a bad Man has this Unhappiness peculiar to himself, that in a Matter of so much Consequence, wherein his very Soul lies at Stake, he is sure to go away without hearing any more than one half of the Case. But,

SECONDLY, Christianity is the most excellent Religion, not only with Respect to the Excellency of that Happiness which it proposes, but also with Respect to the *Certainty* which it gives us of that Happiness; which if we consider comparatively, and with a View to what it was before the coming of Christ, we shall very quickly perceive how truly it is said of him, that he *hath brought Life and Immortality to Light by the Gospel*. Some Footsteps there are indeed of the Belief of a Future State to be met with in the Histories of all Ages, to which the Light of Nature has contributed much, and those Reve-

lations which God from Time to Time hath been pleased to make of himself have contributed more. But this is all but Darknes in Comparison to that Clearness of Knowledge and Fulness of Assurance which we receive from the Gospel. The Heathens had generally either very wrong or very faint and imperfect Conceptions about it; and even those who by the Help of a superior Genius had raised themselves above the common and ordinary Way of thinking, and have said the finest Things about the Immortality of the Soul, and the Happiness of a Life to come, even these, I say, have spoken of it with so much Diffidence and Hesitation, as plainly shews, that it was rather what they wished and hoped for, than what they were able with any Manner of Certainty to promise to themselves. And no Wonder; for this indeed is a Point in which Nature seems to be but a lame and ignorant Guide. For what is the Way that she takes to lead us to this Belief? Why, she first directs us to God, the Creator of all Things, whom we behold cloathed with the glorious Perfections of infinite Justice, Goodness and Holiness. Then she bids us to look down upon ourselves, and consider the Methods of his Providence, by which his Favours are dealt out among us with an uneven and undistinguishing Hand, some swelling and mounted up with the Gale of prosperous Wickedness, and others sinking down under the Load of oppressed Vertue and Innocence. And a just Inference indeed it is, that since in this Life *all things happen alike to all*; since there is *one Event to the Righteous and to the Wicked, to the Clean and to the Unclean*, there must, if God is God, be another Life, in which he will shew himself to be the Patron of Vertue, by adjusting these Inequalities, and making a proper Distinction in his Dealings, according to the different Merits or Demerits of Men. This Way then brings us at last to a Future State; but it doth not lead us to a State of Immortality, since even a Temporary Retribution may be of such a Sort as will abundantly compensate for the greatest of Evils which the very best of Men may suffer in this short Span of Life. In short, Nature teaches good Men to expect a Reward, but it gives no Assurance of that rich and exceeding great Reward which the Gospel proposes.

If we go to the *Jews*, we shall not find the Case much clearer even among them. Under the *Patriarchs* we find no express Mention of the Belief of a Future State, though if we consider the many Revelations that God was pleased to make to good Men in those Days, and the great Readiness and Cheerfulness of their Obedience to the Commands of God under the most unpromising Circumstances, and even under the greatest Hardships, it will leave us little Room to doubt whether they had such a Belief or not. Certain it is that this Belief did generally obtain amongst the later *Jews*, which they gathered, it is likely, partly from the Light of Nature, partly from God's general Promises, partly from the Traditions of their Forefathers, but principally from the Prophets under the Law, some of which have expressly directed them to it. And this in general you may observe, that the nearer you come to the Times of the Messiah, the more clear and express Revelations you shall find concerning a Life to come; these Revelations being (as the incomparable *Grotius* hath somewhere observed) intended by Providence, as the Dawning of that glorious Day which was to shine forth under the Gospel Dispensation. But though the *Jews* before the coming of Christ were under a general Belief of a future State, yet as to the Nature and Circumstances of it, they were for the most Part very grossly ignorant. As to the End of wicked Men, they were under very great Uncertainty about it, some believing that they should be raised, and others not. And as to the Happiness even of good Men, all indeed believed that it would be long, but many were of Opinion that it would not be eternal. Besides, the Happiness which they expected, was not such a Happiness as I have described, and as the Gospel teaches us to expect, but a gross and carnal Happiness, consisting in the Affluence and Abundance of every Thing which has a Tendency to gratify the Bodily Appetites: And this was the Occasion
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of that idle Cavil of the *Sadducees* against our Saviour concerning the Woman that had seven Husbands, *Whose Wife should she be?* These *Sadducees* denied a Future State, and they laid this as a Trap in our Saviour's Way, with which they were wont to ensnare and perplex the *Jewish Doctors*, who supposed that in the Resurrection there would be *eating and drinking, marrying and giving in Marriage*. Whence happened all this, but through Want of Clearness in the Divine Revelations hitherto vouchsafed? Now these were the Mistakes which our Saviour came to rectify, and to declare once for all under the highest Authority, not by general and indefinite Promises, nor under the Vail of Types and Figures, but peremptorily and without Reserve, that *there should be a Resurrection both of the Just and the Unjust; a Day when God by him should judge the Secrets of Mens Hearts, and render to every Man according to his Works. To them who by patient Continuance in well-doing sought for Glory and Honour and Immortality, Eternal Life; but to them who were contentious, and obeyed not the Truth, but obeyed Unrighteousness, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish upon every Soul of Man that doth evil.*

BUT what Assurance, you'll ask, does even the Gospel give us of these Things? I answer, the greatest of all; and unless we will lay aside all the Authority of Historical Evidence, we can no more doubt of them than we can of the Being of a God; of which whosoever is resolved to doubt, ought first of all to doubt of his own Existence, and the Existence of every Thing which he sees about him. He who says there is no God, is a Contradiction to himself; for the very Breath with which he utters it, loudly speaks that there is: And a Man may as well say there is no God, as doubt whether, supposing that there is a God, he will be true in fulfilling his Word. Now thus it is that the Veracity of God comes to be concerned in the Case, *viz.* that he has set his Seal to the Doctrine of a Life to come, by those Signs and mighty Wonders which he wrought by the Hands of those whom he sent to bear Witness of it to the World; and this, I say, is that which the common Evidences of Fact, which we admit of in other Cases, will not permit us to call in Question. — But the Subject opens itself too wide upon me, and suggests too great a Variety of Matter to be brought within the Compass of a single Discourse. And indeed it may well be spared, considering that I am speaking to those, not who want to be persuaded to become Christians, but, who being already such, may (through God's Grace) apply these Observations to the strengthening of their Faith, and be stirred up, both in Heart and Life, to give Praise and Glory to him *who hath called us out of Darkness into his marvellous Light*. Proceed we therefore,

THIRDLY, To the last of those Particulars, from whence the Excellency of Christianity does principally appear, to wit, the *Means* which it proposeth for the Attainment of this Happiness. And of these a very brief Description will suffice; for *what doth the Lord our God require of us, but to do Justice, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with our God?* Or, to use the Words of the Apostle, which express the same Thing, what doth he require of us, but *to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World?* After the receiving of the Faith (which is supposed in every Christian) and besides those few positive Precepts of the Gospel, which are in no wise burdensome, Christianity is nothing else but the Law of Nature revived and perfected. And if you say that the keeping of this Law is a great Thing, I answer, so it is; for to be thoroughly virtuous is indeed a great Attainment. But comparatively, or with Respect to the Promises of the Gospel, it is but very small, and considering what Sort of Creatures he hath made us, no more than what is absolutely necessary. Remember, Brethren, what I said before, and what we all of us experience, that God hath given us Reason; and that the Happiness reserved for us in the World to come is the Happiness of Reason.

son. Tell me then, what could God have required less to prepare and qualify us for this Happiness, than the Use and Improvement of Reason? Or how is it not absurd to suppose that he should have made an Indulgence of Sense to the Debasement of Reason consistent with the Measures of obtaining an Inheritance in that Kingdom, in which there is nothing that has any Relation to Sense? The Means ought always to bear a Proportion to the End; and as it would be a ridiculous Sort of Management to keep a Child in Ignorance, whom you intend afterwards to breed up for a Philosopher; so it is every whit as irrational to suppose that a sensual Life is in the very Nature of it at all proper to be made the Way to Heaven. But this is a Case which requires no great arguing; for in Truth when God requires us to be holy, he doth but in other Words command us to act like ourselves; and in this Conflict between the Flesh and the Spirit, the Gospel sounds to us no other Alarm than this, *Be strong, and quit yourselves like Men.* This is the great Hardship, I say, which *Christianity* lays upon us; to be what God has made us to be; to do that which generally and in the main we should (if we are wise) chuse to do, though we had no other Reward before us than merely the Pleasure of doing it. For it will be hard to suppose that Man is the only absurd Composition in the Universe, and that whilst all other Agents regularly pursue the Tract which Nature has assigned them, it should be his Part only to run into eccentric Motions, and that his greatest Happiness should lie in acting least of all within his proper Sphere. True indeed it is that the Way of Vertue is sometimes rugged and difficult, insomuch that *if in this Life we had Hope only*, Reason would in many Cases prove a very troublesome and unhappy Guide. But here it is that the Reward of a Life to come offers itself to support us; upon this Account it is that such a Reward becomes indeed proper; for if Vertue were always its own Reward, we should have little Reason to look for any other. Put the Case now, if you please, in the worst Light you can. Suppose your Reason calls you one Way, and the Pleasures, the Profits, the Sorrows, the Terrors of this Life shew you another, what will you do? Will you yet take Vertue for your Guide, and under her Conduct *press forward* through all Difficulties *for the Prize of our high Calling in Jesus Christ*; or will you quit your Pretensions to the heavenly Crown; resolve to be as happy as you can here, and be content to be as miserable as God can make you hereafter? The Case will admit of no long Deliberation. Be but as wise here as you are in other Matters of infinitely less Concern, and you are sure to make the happy Choice. Consider only what you should think of the Man, who, rather than submit to a few Days Confinement, and undergo the Fatigue of applying wholesome, though sharp Remedies, should suffer himself to linger out a long and tedious Life in Pain and Sickness; think of this, I say, or any other Instance of the like Sort, which your own Fancy will easily suggest, and the Question is answered. But it will be hard indeed to find out a Comparison which will fully reach the Case. For between a few Days and the longest Life of Man, and between the Tedioufness of the Remedy and the Trouble of the Disease, there is some Proportion. But between the longest Life of Man and Eternity, there is no Proportion; nor are the greatest *Sufferings of this Life worthy to be compared with those Pains, and those Glories*, which shall be the Reward of our Constancy, or the Punishment of our Cowardice.

BUT still you'll say, that to maintain a constant Steadiness in the Way of Vertue so as never at any Time to deviate, is a hard Thing. And indeed so it is, too hard for Man in his corrupted and degenerate State to perform. But for this Reason God (to our great Comfort) doth not require it, but enjoins Holiness in such a Manner, as to leave all possible Room for the Repentance (that is, for the Reformation) of the Sinner. I do not mean that Holiness is not always our indispensable Duty, for this it certainly is, and necessarily must be. But the Case is, that God, if we repent, accepts us, though we have done a
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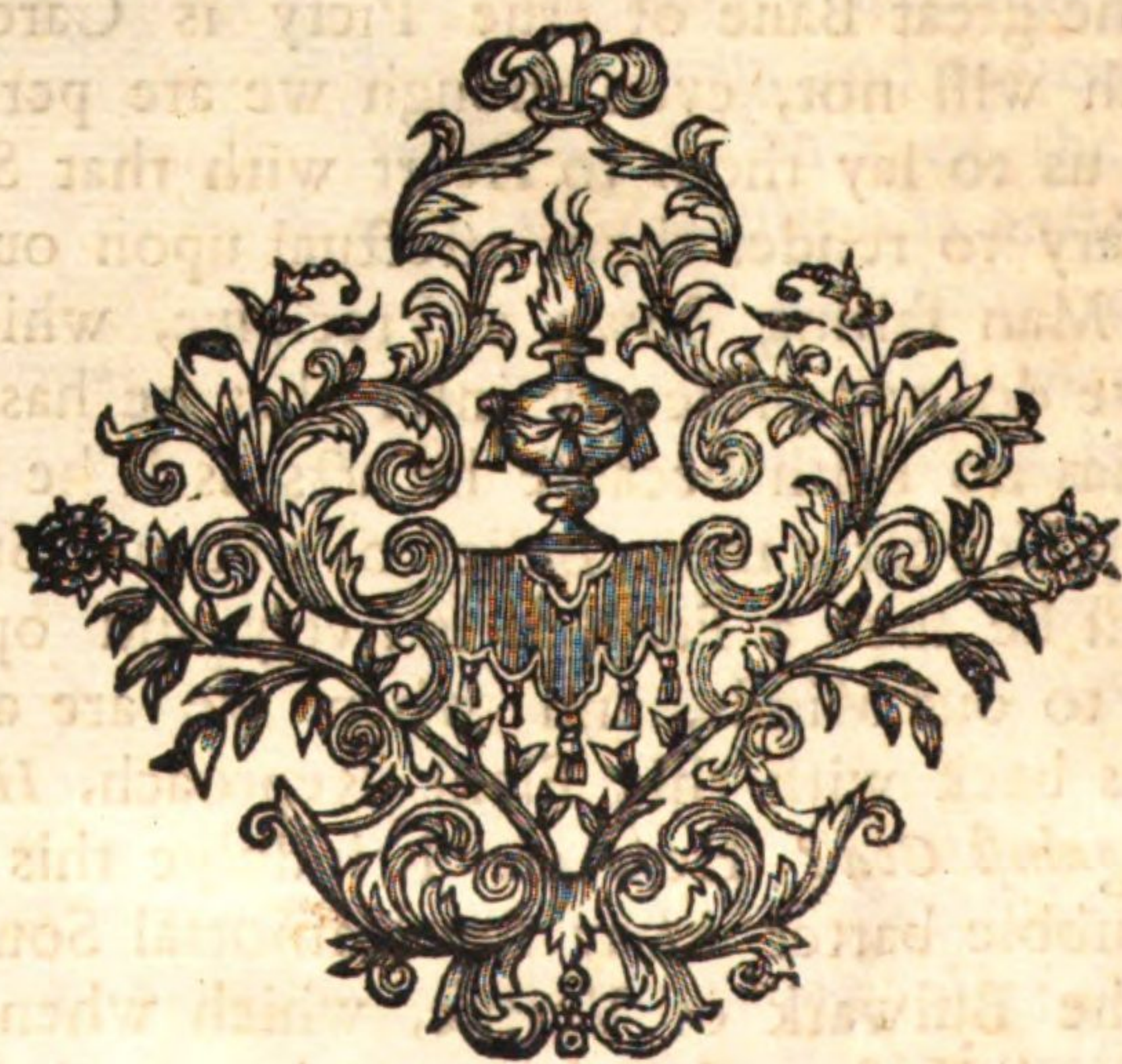
great deal less than we ought to have done. His Commands reach to all, and to every Person at all Times, so that we can never do a vicious Thing and say we have not sinned; but *if we sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous*, through whom we shall be forgiven, if we do so no more; for *at what Time soever the Wicked Man turneth away from his Wickedness, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his Soul alive*. And who now can forbear to cry out with the Apostle, *Behold the Goodness and Severity of God!* His Severity appears in this, that he allows no Man at any Time to do wickedly. And his Goodness appears in this, that he punisheth none but the Incurrible, none but those who not only do wickedly, but who persist in Wickedness, whom neither his Mercies will invite, nor his Judgments terrify. A convincing Evidence this, how truly it is said of him, that *he is not willing that any should perish*, and which (by the Way) is so far from being a reasonable Encouragement for a Man to sin, that it ought rather to raise in him the tenderest Sentiments of Honour and Gratitude; and since it is always most base and disingenuous to offend that Goodness which is most hard to be overcome, the more ready God is to forgive, the less ready ought we to be so to behave ourselves as to stand in Need of Forgiveness.

So that upon the whole I think it appears, that the Gospel proposes to us the greatest Happiness at the least Expence possible; which Point I might farther have illustrated, by shewing what a mighty Power the very Prospect of the Excellency of that Reward which is laid up in Heaven for us, has to allay and sweeten the Troubles of this Mortal Life, which is such, that if you will believe those who have experienced it, a Man may even *glory in Tribulations*, and triumph in the midst of Sufferings. But I must not trespass too far upon the Patience that is indulged me. I shall therefore only beg Leave to add two short Observations, and I have done. And,

I. IF *Christianity* be so excellent a Religion; if it proposes the greatest Happiness under the most easy Conditions, how comes it to pass may some say that there is so much Wickedness to be found amongst those who have taken upon themselves the Name and Profession of *Christians*? Is it because in Truth they are not Believers, but only pretend to be so? This I fear is sometimes the Case, though I hope comparatively but very seldom. For indeed such is the Light and Evidence of the Gospel, that it is the very last Thing I can suppose of any Man whom I know to have Sense, that he is under a settled Principle of Infidelity. But the great Bane of true Piety is Carelessness, and Want of Consideration, which will not, even though we are persuaded of the Truth of these Things, suffer us to lay them to Heart with that Seriousness of Application which is necessary to render them effectual upon our Lives and Conversations. If we see a Man falling down a Precipice, which lay plainly in the Way before him, we do not presently infer that he has no Eyes. Nor must we say that a Man has no Faith because he acts as if he had none; for it is a great Mistake to suppose that a mere Belief of a Future State is enough to make a good Man; it must be such a Faith as is lively and operative; such a Faith as is always present to our Minds, and when we are about to yield to any Temptation, pulls us back with this silent Reproach, *How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?* How can I indulge this unreasonable Passion, and for an empty Bubble barter away my Immortal Soul? A serious and considerate Temper is the Bulwark of Vertue, which when once thrown down, Appetite, like an armed Host, rushes in upon her, and divides the Spoil. 'Tis the Want of this which runs Men into the grossest Absurdities in common Life; and what Wonder is it then that it should do so in Religion too? The Power of Faith is indeed very great; but it is all one in Effect, whether a Man has no Faith, or whether he never considers that he has any. Wherefore,

2. LET us learn hence not to judge of the Truth of any Religion, or of any Persuasion in Religion, by the Lives of its Professors; nor conclude, that because a Man acts ill, therefore he entertains ill Principles. For if a good Life is not always the certain Effect of a good Religion, a wicked Life can be no Argument of a bad one. But though 'tis wrong for Men to argue thus, yet there is nothing more common; and amongst the many Ways by which the Progress of *Christianity* has been obstructed in the World, we must not look upon the scandalous Lives of *Christians* as the least considerable. Take heed then, Brethren, that we be not found amongst the Number of those who throw *Stumbling-blocks and Offences in the Way* of others. But there is another Consideration which more directly concerns us, *viz.* That *to whom much is given, of him much will be required.* God expects that our Improvements should bear a Proportion to the Means he has given us; and you know what was the Portion of the *unprofitable Servant*, who had *hid up his Talent in a Napkin* when his Lord came to demand back *his own with Usury*. What would have been his Punishment, if instead of hiding up *one Talent*, he had squander'd away *ten*? A Question which it is proper to ask, because this indeed is the Case of the wicked Christian, who has received his *ten Talents*, which he not only improveth not, but abuses, to the Dishonour of his Lord. And what then shall we be able to say for ourselves at the great Day of Accounts, when we shall be found to be a great deal worse qualified than many upon whom the Light of the Gospel never shined! Surely though we are now so unwise as to contend with God, we shall not then dare to tell him to his Face that he is a *hard Master*, and that we know what it was fitting for him to require of us better than he. But if we should even thus far draw a bad Example into a Precedent, we know the Issue. God will justify himself in the Sight of Angels, and to our eternal Shame consign us over to that *outer Darkeness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.*

BUT, Beloved, I hope for better Things though I thus speak. And may God by his holy Spirit so direct and rule our Hearts, that by serving him faithfully in this World, we may in the World to come obtain Life everlasting. To whom be Glory and Praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*



F I N I S.



Stebbing, Henry,

Polemical Tracts or a collection of papers written in defence of the
doctrines and discipline of the Church of England

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